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**THE NEW TESTAMENT
AS IT STANDS**

The New Testament As It Stands

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of the Books of the New Testament,"
and "A Harmony of the Gospels"*

Foreword by
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*To my Daughter,
apart from whose encouragement
this book would probably never
have been finished*

FOREWORD

By

REV. EDWARD A. WICHER, D.D.

*Professor of New Testament Interpretation in the
San Francisco Theological Seminary*

INASMUCH as the author of this book was once the professor of New Testament Interpretation in San Francisco Theological Seminary, it is a great personal pleasure to me to write the Foreword to it. Dr. Kerr has had a long and fruitful career in the service of the Church as professor, pastor, author and editor. No one could be better fitted to write such a book as he here presents to the public. He knows both the critical and exegetical literature of the New Testament, and the problems of the teacher who seeks to present his knowledge to a class of average men and women who are not technically trained in the science of theology and Biblical criticism, but who are seeking light from God's Word to enable them to live the Christian life.

Wherever the true minister of Christ may be led by his researches in Biblical literature, whatever he may find there, ultimately the test of the worth of his work must be its effectiveness in bringing men nearer to Christ and in building up Christian character. This is the final test. And any criticism

which makes its disciples averse from prayer or lukewarm in the service of their fellow men is discredited upon its face.

Dr. Kerr has a lively sense of what is natural and human. And this is an indispensable quality for an interpreter. He knows, for instance, that if Luke spent two years with Paul in Cæsarea, he must have conversed earnestly and at length with the brethren of the Church of Palestine, and therefore he did not depend wholly upon written documents for his wonderful stories of the tender grace and unerring compassion of Jesus. In the study of the formation of the writings of the New Testament, the importance of the personal intercourse of the leaders of the Apostolic Church is something to which adequate weight has not been given by most of the writers of works on New Testament Introduction. The great value of Dr. Kerr's book is that he does this very thing.

This is certainly a book which in the hand of the Sunday School teacher, or the intelligent layman generally, will be very useful and helpful.

PREFACE

FOR many years I have been increasingly impressed with the need for a manual which would treat the New Testament in such a way that it would be adapted to the needs of the average Bible student, and especially of young people in classes and conferences. In this busy age with its unceasing demands upon the time of active people, there is for the vast majority of them no time left for an academic study of the Bible, and indeed, if they had the time, they have not had the preparation that would enable them to handle intelligently the books on the New Testament which are coming in a steady stream from the press. Many, if not most, of these books which have been written about the New Testament, its origin and contents, treat them solely as a body of literature to which only the ordinary laws of literary criticism as such are applied. A while ago a friend gave me a book which had been recommended to her and others by a Bible class teacher. It is wholly academic in its treatment of the books of the New Testament, which constitute its subject, and there is scarce an intimation throughout that they were anything more than ordinary literature. My friend got nothing out of it and turned it over to me. That is about as much as the average person can get out of the academic, dissecting-room treat-

ment to which the Bible in whole or in part is being subjected in these days. These books may be scholarly in the extreme, and give evidence of great erudition, but they give little or nothing to the person who has not been trained to the use of the dissecting-room processes.

Far be it from me to discount the learning of much of the modern analytical criticism, but it often so shreds the Bible that there is little, if any, vitality left in it by the process. Indeed, much of this criticism might be called vivisectional, for when its operation is completed, there is no life left in the dismembered parts, just a torso. With a cocksureness which is to say the least refreshing, or it may be depressing, you will be told, as for example in the Pastoral Epistles, what are the genuine Pauline parts and what are not. Or they will take the Gospel according to John and tell you how its material should be rearranged, if one would have it in its proper form. So this vivisection goes on until one is puzzled to know what is what and which is which.

In Bishop Gore's *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, there is a section on "Advice to the Ordinary Reader of the Historical Books," in which we read, "Finally, we would say the Bible has been given you, in the providence of God, *as it stands*. It was the Old Testament *as it stands* which became the Scriptures of Christ and His Church. In proportion as you are a student you will want to master the historical origin and literary character of its several parts. But when you have

done that, so far as you are able, and willingly or reluctantly have accepted the new estimates of the books, as this Commentary seeks to give them to you, you will go back to the Bible *as it stands*.”¹ It is not necessary for me to say that the italics are mine, but the words have given me the title for this book, *The New Testament As It Stands*.

I am impelled to express the hope that this little book may receive such a reading as has been accorded to my two other books, and that it may help to strengthen faith in the historical character and trustworthiness of that part of the Bible of which it treats.

J. H. K.

Berkeley, California.

¹ Page 188.

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE NEW TESTAMENT AS IT STANDS consists of twenty-seven books, of which five are Historical: the Four Gospels and the Acts; twenty-one are Epistolary: thirteen by Paul, the seven Catholic Epistles, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude, and the anonymous Hebrews; and one Apocalyptic book, the Revelation. These twenty-seven books come from nine writers, four of whom were Apostles, Matthew, John, Peter and Paul; two were companions of Apostles, Mark and Luke; two were brethren of our Lord, James and Jude; and the other, the unknown author of Hebrews.

These twenty-seven books constitute what is known as the New Testament Canon or collection, or, in other words, The New Testament. This Canon had become fixed before the middle of the second century. These books seem to have naturally gravitated together without the force of any external ecclesiastical authority. It was a gradual process, and we cannot put the finger on any particular date and say that it was completed at that time. Salmon writes, "It is a remarkable fact that we have no early interference of Church

authority in the making of a Canon; no council discussed this subject; no formal decisions were made. The Canon seems to have shaped itself. . . . It was owing to no adventitious authority, but by their own weight, that they crushed all rivals out of existence.”¹ The first formal recognition of a definite and distinct collection cannot be found until the time of the Council of Laodicea in 363 A. D. But that action was not a decision as to what books should be included, but rather the formal recognition of what had been in the Canon for a long time, possibly for as much as at least two centuries.

It is true that in some sections of the Church, some books not in the Canon were accorded an ecclesiastical use, such as the Shepherd of Hermas, the Epistle of Barnabas and others, but they were never given a place in the Canon. It is also true that some of the books now in the Canon were not accepted in certain sections for a time, but that was occasioned in practically every such case by doubts as to their authors. But none others than those we have in our New Testament have ever been recognized by the Church at large as of canonical authority.

The reader who wishes to enter more fully into the question of the formation of the New Testament Canon should consult more technical books than this one attempts to be. Outstanding names in this connection are Gregory, Westcott, Schaff,

¹ Salmon, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 144 (Murray).

Souter and Nestle.* To these should be added the larger Introductions and the various Bible Dictionaries. It will be found to be a most interesting study. The more radical writers, whose theories necessitate longer periods for the formation of the Canon, and whose tendencies lead them to date books of the Canon in the second century, should be read with great caution.

Books on the entire New Testament recommended.

Chas. R. Erdman's Expositions, Westminster Press.

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Cambridge Press.

Questions

1. Name and classify the books of the New Testament.
2. How many different authors had a hand in the composition of these books?
3. How did they find their way into the Canon?
4. Name the authors of the books and their respective books.
5. When was the first formal ecclesiastical recognition of the Canon?

* 1. *The Canon and Text of the New Testament.*
2. *On the Canon of the New Testament.*
3. *Companion to the Greek Testament.*
4. *The Text and Canon of the New Testament.*
5. *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament.*

PART ONE: THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

CHAPTER II

THE FOUR GOSPELS

WE are so accustomed to seeing the titles of the Four Gospels as they are in our Bibles that doubtless many assume they have been there from the beginning. But they were not to be found there until after their formation into a collection. It was not until the second century that the term "Gospels" was applied to these four books which record words of Jesus and events of His life. Then to differentiate the several parts of the record, the names of their respective authors were prefixed, and they became known severally as "The Gospel according to Matthew, to Mark, to Luke, and to John." Justin Martyr (145 A. D.) is the one to whom the first mention of this custom is to be ascribed, for he speaks of the Apostles' "Memoirs which are called Gospels." His words imply that in his day these books were thus designated.

Many volumes have been written and many theories propounded concerning the sources of the Four Gospels. That sayings of Jesus and events of His life were early recorded, and that many of His words were repeated under different circum-

stances, almost goes without saying. Luke, in the preface to his Gospel, states that "many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us" (1: 1). He also speaks of the testimony of eye-witnesses who "from the beginning were ministers of the word." He thus recognized both oral and written sources. It is in considering these sources that the analytical critics subject the existing books to their dissecting knives, in their efforts to account for their origin and to build up their theories as to their construction. Sometimes one may wonder, as he attempts to follow their fine-spun theories, whether they do not almost regard the books as jig-saw puzzles or mosaics, to be taken to pieces and re-formed according to their ingenuity. A writer in a late issue of *The Expository Times*, in an article on "The Integrity of the Epistle to the Hebrews," writes: "We may well ask whether the practice of dissecting letters of the New Testament into separate parts of different letters without the support of any manuscript evidence, simply because, with our very limited knowledge of the circumstances of their origin, we do not possess all the clues necessary for their complete understanding, is not really arbitrary criticism. Is it not the scholar's duty under such circumstances to make the best of the epistles as tradition has handed them down to us, and not make 'confusion worse confounded'?"¹ The same

¹ R. V. G. Tasker in *The Expository Times*, December, 1935, p. 136.

criticism may be justly applied to similar efforts in the Gospels. Deissmann has well said with reference to their treatment of some of the Pauline Epistles, that these experts of the dissecting room have used "the methods of the torturing Inquisition."

The popular fad in these circles just now is what is known as "Form-Criticism." The term is a German invention. It is being adopted by English critics under a slightly changed name, "Form-History." According to Dr. Easton, this method "describes the history of certain preliterate forms not consciously created by individuals, but developed by the force of constant oral repetition."² The trouble with all of these theories is that their authors are not able to see the town for the houses. As yet, not a single manuscript of any of the assumed strata of these theories has been discovered, and it is all ingenious guesswork.

But the great criticism of these theories is that all of them without an exception absolutely ignore the personal contacts of the authors of the Gospels. The Sermon on the Mount was delivered by Jesus immediately after His choice of the Twelve Apostles, one of whom was Matthew, who records this inaugural of Jesus. This Apostle's ability to write and speak the current vernacular Hebrew (Aramaic) and Greek is assured by the position he occupied as a tax collector (publican). Is it assuming too much to affirm that he would nat-

² B. S. Easton, *The Gospel Before the Gospels*, p. 31 (Scribner's).

urally make a record of Jesus' words spoken on the Horns of Hattin? Papias states that "Matthew wrote the oracles in Hebrew." This accounts for his Aramaic Gospel, of the existence of which there is no doubt in the minds of students of this question, though as yet it has never been discovered. Matthew "forsook all and followed Jesus," and he gave himself without reserve to his newly found occupation with all the powers of his nature. He doubtless felt that he owed a debt to his Jewish people, for the position he had occupied marked him in their estimation as false to his nation. And what was more natural than that he should make use of the Greek vernacular at his command and give his Gospel in that language also! Who can deny this possibility?

The contacts of Mark and Luke in Rome, when they were at work at some stage of their respective Gospels, are sufficient to account for the manifest facts in connection with them. Indeed, it passes all comprehension that the dissecting critics have utterly ignored this contact and have erected their various theories of dependence on successive documents and a gradual evolution of the Synoptics to their present form. No wonder that there is a tendency among them to date our canonical Gospels late in the first century, if not even in the second, so as to allow sufficient time for their "form-history" to accomplish its development. Why not give attention to these facts rather than to the theories which grow more complicated as time goes on?

There is another factor that demands more than a passing mention, which by the way is practically never referred to, and that is the definite promise by the Master of the Spirit in John 16: 13-14. The coöperation of these two factors, the personal contacts of the authors and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will adequately account for the whole matter. Each writer had his own linguistic peculiarities and specific purpose in writing, both of which affected their respective books. Dr. Marcus Dods says: "The date of the first attempts at gospel-writing must have been early; and it is a strong argument in favour of the early date and authenticity of the canonical gospels that none of those which preceded them had so rooted themselves in the popular esteem as to ensure their survival. Their disappearance and the exclusive acceptance of our four gospels can be accounted for only on the ground that they were understood to be by writers who had direct access to authoritative information."⁸

The first three Gospels have long been called the Synoptic Gospels. The term signifies that they give the same general view of the events of the life of Christ. The Gospel according to John stands somewhat apart from them by reason of its contents, covering largely events in the life of Jesus and words of His, which are not recorded by the Synoptists, about ninety-two per cent of it being peculiar to that Gospel. This will come out more clearly when that Gospel is considered in its turn.

⁸ Marcus Dods, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 5.

Meanwhile, it would be well to note certain figures about the peculiarities and concordances, which are generally given in this connection:

Mark has 7 peculiarities and 93 concordances.

Matthew has 42 peculiarities and 58 concordances.

Luke has 59 peculiarities and 41 concordances.

John has 92 peculiarities and 8 concordances.

The following characterization of the Four Gospels by Dean Farrar could scarcely be improved. He says: "St. Matthew's is the Gospel for the Jews; the Gospel of the Past; the Gospel which sees in Christianity a *fulfillment* of Judaism; the Gospel of Discourses; the Didactic Gospel; the Gospel which represents Christ as the Messiah of the Jews. St. Mark's is the Gospel for the Romans; the Gospel of the Present; the Gospel of Incident; the Anecdotal Gospel; the Gospel which represents Christ as the Son of God and Lord of the World. St. Luke's is the Gospel for the Greeks; the Gospel of the Future; the Gospel of Progressive Christianity, of the Universality and Gratuitousness of the Gospel; the Historic Gospel; the Gospel of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and Saviour of Mankind. St. John's is preëminently the Gospel of the Church; the Gospel of Eternity; the Spiritual Gospel; the Gospel of Christ as the Eternal Son and the Incarnate Word." ⁴

⁴ F. W. Farrar, *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges on Luke*, p. 17 (Macmillan).

Questions

1. What two sources of the Gospels have been neglected in the consideration of their origin?
2. How do the Four Gospels compare as to their contents?
3. How does Dean Farrar characterize the Gospels?
4. How do the Synoptic Gospels differ from John's Gospel?
5. Does the difference of John's Gospel from the Synoptics affect its historical character?

CHAPTER III

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

MATTHEW, the author of the First Gospel, tells the story of his call to be a follower of Jesus thus: "And as Jesus passed by from thence, he saw a man, called Matthew, sitting at the place of toll: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him" (9: 9). Luke informs us that, "he forsook all, and rose up and followed him" (5: 28). In Mark's account of the event, he is called "Levi, the son of Alphæus" (2: 14), and in Luke's, "a publican, named Levi" (5: 27). In his own list of the Apostles, Matthew calls himself "Matthew the publican" (10: 3); while Mark and Luke, in their lists, simply call him "Matthew" (Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 15).

There is a "James, the son of Alphæus" in each of the lists of the Apostles (Matt. 10: 3; Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 13). Mark calls Matthew "the son of Alphæus" (3: 18). On the basis of this, some have claimed that Matthew (Levi) and James were brothers. But in the lists of Mark and Luke, Thomas is named between these two; while Matthew places his own name ahead of that of James, whom he also calls "the son of Alphæus" (10: 3). In his list of the Twelve, Matthew gives them as "The first, Simon,

who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother" (10: 2). If he and James also were brothers, it is strange that he does not indicate this relationship, as he had done in the cases of the other two sets of brothers in the apostolate. There is simply a coincidence in the fact that the father of each of them was named Alphæus, a fairly common name.

The call of Matthew and the other eleven to the apostolate took place just before our Lord preached His Sermon on the Mount. His call to be a follower of Jesus was some time before that event, and took place in Capernaum. The choice of the Twelve was some time later, and just after Jesus' return from Jerusalem, where He had healed the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5: 1-9).

The Synoptists, including Matthew himself, record the feast, which Matthew gave to Jesus, as though it immediately followed his call to discipleship (Matt. 9: 10-17; Mark 2: 15-22; Luke 5: 29-39). But a closer examination of the records leads to the conclusion that it did not actually take place until some time later, and immediately before the raising of Jairus' daughter.¹ They all record the feast in connection with his original call, because it is the only other event relating to him given by them, and it was a kind of sequel to it. Except in the lists of the Apostles, his name does not occur again in the Gospels, nor

¹ See my *Harmony of the Gospels*, Sections 38, 56, 57 (Revell).

elsewhere in the New Testament until we meet it in the list of those who were present in the upper chamber after the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1: 13).

Tradition has various stories concerning Matthew, that he went to Parthia, or Persia, or even Ethiopia. But as to his life after that memorable meeting in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, we have no certain knowledge. He simply disappears from the scene of action, as did most of the Apostles, but leaving behind him his "Kingly Gospel," as it has fittingly been called. And since we cannot follow him personally any further, we must content ourselves with the study of that part of the Gospel record which has always been attributed to him, the Gospel according to Matthew.

The book itself, just as in the case of the other two Synoptics, makes no claim as to its authorship, but the unanimous opinion of the early Church was that it was written by Matthew, the Apostle. Papias, a companion of Polycarp and a hearer of the Apostle John, tells us that "Matthew wrote the oracles in Hebrew." There has been almost endless discussion over that apparently asserted Hebrew (Aramaic) original, but scholars are generally agreed that our Greek Matthew is not a translation. The special point is that authorship by Matthew is affirmed. The official position he held as a tax collector is a guarantee that he was able to read and write, and makes it practically certain that he had at his command the vernacular Greek of his day in addition to his natural Hebrew (Aramaic) vernacular. His very position gave him

a large contact with the world in which he lived, and was an important factor in preparing him for the position he came to fill as an Apostle and also as the author of one of the Four Gospels.

Only a cursory reading of Matthew's book will lead one to note that it contains five sermons, or collections of words, of Jesus: 1. The Sermon on the Mount (5: 1-7: 27); 2. Instructions to the Apostles (10: 5-42); 3. Parables of the Kingdom (13: 1-52); 4. Discourse on Humility and Forgiveness (18: 1-35); 5. The Prophetic Discourses (24: 1-25: 46). After each of these discourses, or call them what you will, there is the same conclusion with slight variations, "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words, etc." (7: 28; 11: 1; 13: 53; 19: 1; 26: 1). It seems as though from 5: 1, Matthew built his Gospel around these passages, and in a sense they are the backbone of his book.

Another outstanding feature of this Gospel is its repeated references to the Old Testament, there being no less than sixty-five passages which refer to it, forty-three of them being verbal citations. A Jew almost religiously avoided the use of the name of God. While the other evangelists use the expression "the kingdom of God," Matthew thirty-three times calls it "the kingdom of heaven." God is called by him "the heavenly Father" six times, and "Father in heaven" sixteen times. In line with his manifest purpose to portray Jesus as the Messiah, Matthew calls attention to the fact that He fulfilled the Scriptures in this and that

respect (1: 22-23; 2: 5-6; 4: 13-16; 8: 16-17; 12: 15-21; 13: 14-15: 35; 21: 4-5; 26: 24, 56; 27: 9). His Gospel was evidently designed to confirm Jewish Christians in their belief that Jesus Christ was none other than the Messiah of Old Testament type and promise and prophecy.

As to the date of composition, there have been widely divergent opinions, some placing it quite late in the first century, while others firmly hold to the conviction that it antedated the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., of which it contains the as yet unfulfilled prophecy. If we are to be influenced by the belief of the early Church, we would have to place it before Luke, and possibly as early as about 50 A. D.

Bearing in mind what has been said about the Five Discourses, around which his matter seems to be grouped, we need not be surprised if we find that Matthew is not as strictly chronological in arrangement as Mark and Luke. He begins with the genealogical table, showing that Jesus was "the son of David, the son of Abraham." This is followed by his account of the Birth and Infancy of Jesus, and other circumstances preparatory to His Public Ministry (1: 1-4: 11). He passes entirely over the Judæan Ministry, for the outcome of that had been the definite rejection of Jesus by the Jewish authorities, and naturally would not have fitted into his purpose. The bulk of the matter given relates to Jesus' Galilean Ministry (4: 12-18: 35). This is followed by the account of His last journey to Jerusalem, His residence in and

about the holy city, the Last Passover, and His arrest, trial and crucifixion, and Resurrection (19: 1-28: 20).

The teaching of this Gospel is preëminently Didactic, revolving around the Kingship of Jesus Christ. "The long and chequered history related in the Old Testament finds its consummation and significance in the life of Jesus as recorded by Matthew in this First Gospel."

Questions

1. How much do we definitely know about Matthew?
2. Wherein did his occupation as a publican (tax collector) fit him for the position he came to fill as an Apostle and the author of one of the Gospels?
3. What are the facts concerning his use of the Old Testament?
4. What was the motive that led him to write his book?
5. Is Matthew strictly chronological in the arrangement of his material and why not?

CHAPTER IV

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

THE Second Gospel does not make any claim, nor does it give the slightest clue, as to its authorship. But there was no doubt about this matter in the mind of the early Church, for wherever reference is made to it, the unanimous opinion was that Mark "the interpreter of Peter" wrote it. Nor is there any intimation that any other than he wrote it. Papias, in his *Expositions of the Oracles of the Lord*, according to Eusebius, states that "Mark, having become Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately, though not in order, all that he remembered of the things which were said or done by Christ." Irenæus says that "after the decease of Peter and Paul, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us the things that had been preached by Peter." Peter is thus in a sense connected with this Gospel, but not as its author.

All alike identify Mark with "John, whose surname was Mark" (Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37). He is called John (Acts 13:13), and Mark (Acts 15:39; Col. 4:10; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13). Evidently John was his Jewish name, while Mark was his Roman designation. Mark's mother was the Mary in whose com-

modious home Christians gathered for prayer, and where Peter found them when he was miraculously delivered from prison and impending death (Acts 12: 12). As Peter calls him "my son," it is probable that at that very exciting time, he led the young man to accept Jesus as his personal Saviour. His home was therefore a Christian center in Jerusalem, and there he would hear many of the stories of Jesus' words and works. It is generally believed that the "young man" to whom he refers in 14: 51-52 was none other than himself.

When Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch from their relief visit to Jerusalem, Mark, who was Barnabas' cousin (Col. 4: 10), accompanied them (Acts 12: 25). When the first missionary journey was undertaken by Barnabas and Saul, "they had also John as their attendant" (Acts 13: 5). It is probable that his duty as such was to look after the details of their itinerary through the island of Cyprus. When the missionary band reached the western end of the island, they crossed over to Perga on the mainland, where it is said that "John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem" (Acts 13: 13). Many guesses have been made as to the cause of this, but we know that Paul regarded it as a serious matter, for when they were making preparations for the second missionary journey and Barnabas wished to have Mark accompany them again, Paul was unwilling to have him go since he had left them on their former trip (Acts 15: 36-39).

The outcome of the sharp contention which arose between them about this matter was their separation, and "Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away unto Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas, and went forth" (Acts 15: 39).

Mark's name appears the next time in Paul's Epistles (Col. 4: 10; Philem. 24) as associated with the Apostle during part of the latter's first Roman imprisonment, evidently having won back his confidence. When Paul wrote to the Colossians in 62 A. D., Mark was planning a trip into that region, for he sent salutations from "Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him)" (4: 10). From these words, we infer that Mark had been with Paul long enough for him to have already communicated with them about him. Probably the former defection of Mark from Paul was known to them, possibly was generally known among the Pauline Churches, and the Apostle wanted to show his restored confidence in him, and thus prepare the way for a proper reception of him when he should reach Colossæ. In his Second Epistle to Timothy, Paul wrote, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering" (4: 11). When Peter wrote his First Epistle from Babylon in 64 A. D., Mark was with him, showing that he had carried out his plan to visit Asia Minor, and had journeyed on to Peter at Babylon, and was with him for a time, and that subsequently he had returned to Asia Minor and was somewhere

in the vicinity of Ephesus when Paul wrote his last letter to Timothy. We may be sure that the Apostle's pathetic appeal to Timothy, to hasten to him at Rome, would be responded to and that he would take Mark with him. There Mark and Luke would be brought into contact with one another again, as they had been before. That contact must have had a profound influence on the work on their respective Gospels.

Tradition has it that Mark was sent by Peter subsequently to Egypt. Jerome states that Mark founded the Church at Alexandria and afterwards became its bishop. His death is said to have been a violent one, and his tomb became an object of veneration. It is said that in the year 815 A. D., Venetian sailors stole his relics and took them to Venice, where they were buried under the site of the stately cathedral which bears his name, and thus Mark became the patron saint of the Venetian Republic.

Mark begins his Gospel with the ministry of John the Baptist, and proceeds immediately thereafter to Jesus' Galilean Ministry (1: 14-9: 50). Then follows his account of the last journey to Jerusalem (10: 1-52), and finally of the closing scenes of Jesus' life (11: 1-16: 8). The closing section (16: 9-20) was probably a later addition by another hand than Mark's. The American Revised Version states: "The two oldest Greek manuscripts, and some other authorities, omit from ver. 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel."

All tradition places the composition of this Gospel in Rome, after the death of Peter and Paul. It was natural that Mark should be influenced by the type of Christians among whom he had worked with both Paul and Peter. In his brief, rapid and concise statements of facts of the life of Jesus, his Gospel was peculiarly adapted to the Roman type of mind. It is the Gospel of fact and action. The Greek particle translated "straightway" is used over forty times in his narrative. With a kind of nervous action, he rushes from one event to another. It is the graphic Gospel. Bishop Westcott writes: "At one time we find a minute touch which places the whole scene before us; at another, an accessory circumstance such as often fixes itself on the mind without appearing at the first sight to possess any special interest. Now there is a phrase which reveals the feeling of those who were the witnesses of some mighty work; now a word that preserves some trait of the Saviour's tenderness or some expressive turn of His language."¹

This Gospel preserves the earliest form of the primitive preaching. While in its present form, it was probably not completed until some time after 60 A. D., it presents the earliest form of the story as it was told. It does not contain any of the long discourses of Jesus, but rather the account of His actions. It might well be called the Picturesque Gospel, for it unfolds the story more in

¹ B. F. Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, p. 365 (Macmillan).

the acts of Jesus than in the words He uttered. He "frames a series of pictures," as he rushes forward with a "straightway" from one event to another.

Questions

1. How did Mark lose and regain the confidence of Paul?
2. What distinguished Mark's home in Jerusalem?
3. What contacts did Mark and Luke have in Rome, and what effects did these have upon their respective Gospels?
4. What can you say about his connection with Peter?
5. Mention some of the characteristic features of this Gospel.

CHAPTER V

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

ONE of the most assured conclusions in the study of the Gospels is that "Luke the beloved physician" was the author of the Third Gospel. Professor Ramsay says: "Criticism for a time examined the work attributed to Luke like a corpse, and the laborious autopsy was fruitless. Nothing in the whole history of literary criticism has been so waste and dreary as a great part of the modern critical study of Luke. . . . The method of dissection failed." Another affirms that, "The author of Acts and the Third Gospel is to be identified with Luke, the companion, friend and physician of St. Paul." The Muratorian Canon (170 A. D.) in its fragmentary condition begins, "The third book of the Gospel, according to Luke, the well known physician. Luke wrote in his own name after the ascension of Christ, and when Paul had associated him with himself as one studious of right. Nor did he, himself, see the Lord in the flesh; and he, according as he was able to accomplish it, began his narrative with the nativity of John."

Luke's name appears only three times in the New Testament (Col. 4: 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4: 11). He was a Gentile, for in Colossians 4: 11, 14, he is contrasted with Jewish Christians. Not

only does Paul call him "the beloved physician," but this is borne out by the way he repeatedly uses medical terms in referring to diseases. Godet says, "Luke must have possessed an amount of literary and scientific culture above that of the other evangelists and apostles."¹ Assuming that Luke was also the author of Acts, we may add to our knowledge of him. He became a companion and associate of Paul, and at Acts 16: 10 the "we" passages begin, when he joined the missionary band at Troas, probably because Paul needed medical attention after his recent illness in Galatia (Gal. 4: 13-14). When the apostolic band left Philippi, the narrative changes from "we" to "they" showing that Luke remained in Philippi until the missionaries came back there on the return of their third missionary journey, when he rejoined their company, going with them to Jerusalem, and describing that journey very exactly (Acts 20: 6-21: 17). Luke was doubtless in constant touch with Paul during his imprisonment at Cæsarea. It was during this period that the evangelist was in a position to make the historical investigations of the life of Christ, implied in his introduction to his Gospel (1: 1-4). The "we" passages begin again at Acts 27: 1-28: 16, showing that he was with the Apostle on his tempestuous voyage to Rome. He was with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment (Col. 4: 14; Philem. 24). And when Paul was a prisoner

¹ F. Godet, *Commentary on Luke's Gospel*, Vol. I, p. 17 (T. & T. Clark).

again in Rome, how pathetic the words of the aged Apostle as he writes, "The time of my departure is at hand" (2 Tim. 4: 6), and adds "Only Luke is with me" (4: 11). Faithful Doctor Luke! How dear he must have been to the Apostle to the end!

Luke is the only one of the evangelists who gives any intimation as to his method in writing his Gospel. His classic introduction (1: 1-4) tells us that "many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning the matters which have been fulfilled among us." He claims four things about his investigations: (1) He had "traced the course of all things," (2) "accurately," (3) "from the first" (beginnings), and (4) he had written "in order" (evidently chronologically). His sources accordingly were the fragmentary writings he had found and the testimony of those "who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." Subsequently, his contact with Mark in Rome must have had a great influence on his Gospel. Luke was thus the first Christian historian, and it is interesting to note how he often connects events of the Gospel history with contemporaneous history (1: 5; 2: 1; 3: 1 etc.).

Luke also states plainly his objective in the composition of his Gospel, "To write unto thee, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed" (orally). He certifies to the correctness of his work in this line. The designation "most excellent" shows that Theoph-

ilus, for whose instruction he writes, was a man of official rank, as it does in the cases of Felix (Acts 23: 26; 24: 3) and Festus (26: 25). Some have thought that by Theophilus he meant, as the word signifies, a "lover of God," but the "most excellent" points him out as a definite individual. What his actual relation to or connection with Theophilus may have been, we have no means of knowing. At the time he wrote, Luke had been identified with Paul and his missionary enterprises for a considerable length of time, and hence it may be assumed that while he wrote primarily for Theophilus' instruction, he also had in mind the Gentile world of which his friend was a prominent representative.

Luke's Gospel was doubtless that which Paul had proclaimed to the Greek-speaking world, which was his great field. He traces the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam, and thus presents Him as the brother of mankind, and in his "great interpolation" (9: 51-18: 14), as it has been called, he tells of Jesus' Perean Ministry which was carried on in a largely Gentile region. This portion of his Gospel is not simply, as some have claimed, a collection of sayings and doings of Jesus, the location of which he did not know, for he clearly indicates in it three journeys of Jesus to Jerusalem, namely to Tabernacles (9: 51), to Dedication (13: 22), and to the last Passover (17: 11), showing that he had sequence of time in mind in giving this large section of his Gospel.

Reference has already been made to Luke's

contact with Mark during Paul's first Roman Imprisonment. It is inconceivable that since Luke's investigations must have occurred recently, when Paul was a prisoner in Cæsarea, he should not also have been aided in his work by his association with Mark, when the latter also may have been at work on his Gospel. It is true that tradition says that Mark wrote after the death of Peter and Paul, but he would certainly have been at work on it during Peter's lifetime. The two evangelists would most certainly have talked together about their respective Gospels, which in each case had become their greatest work. This contact of these two men has been utterly ignored by writers in their discussion of the Synoptic Problem, but it undoubtedly furnishes an adequate explanation for much of the coördinations of their Gospels.

Canon Farrar writes of Luke's Gospel: "It is the Gospel not only of children and of the Gentiles, of the humble and the despised, of the blind, the lame, the halt, the maimed, but even of the publican and the harlot, the prodigal and the outcast; not only of Mary, but of the Magdalene; not only of Zacchæus, but of the dying thief." It is the Gospel that presents Jesus as the Saviour of the world. It is worthy of note here that this Gospel furnishes the words for some of the greatest hymns of the Church, the *Ave Maria* (1: 28), the *Magnificat* (1: 46), the *Benedictus* (1: 68), the *Gloria in Excelsis* (2: 14), and the *Nunc Dimittis* (2: 29).

After his preface (1: 1-4), Luke gives matter not found in the other Gospels, beginning his history with events leading up to the birth of John the Baptist (1: 5-80), then of Jesus, His birth and childhood, youth and young manhood (2: 1-52), following that up with his account of the ministry of John the Baptist (3: 1-18). After his account of the baptism and temptation of Jesus, he tells the story of the Galilean Ministry of our Lord (3: 19-9: 50). Next comes the section largely peculiar to Luke, the Perean Ministry, also called the Last Journeys to Jerusalem (9: 51-19: 28). The remainder of Luke's Gospel contains his report of the events of Passion Week, followed by his account of the Resurrection and the Ascension of the Risen Lord (19: 29-24: 53). Renan calls this Gospel, "the most beautiful book ever written."

Questions

1. What was Luke's method of preparing to write his Gospel?
2. What influence did the association of Mark and Luke in Rome have upon their respective Gospels?
3. Give an account of Luke's association with Paul.
4. Where and when did he make the investigations to which he refers?
5. Show wherein his purpose in his Gospel influenced the selection of his material.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

THERE is none of the Four Gospels over which there has been so much discussion as the Fourth Gospel, and that largely over its authorship. Its formal beginning might be dated at 1792 A. D., when Evanson wrote against the integrity of this Gospel. Luthardt in his *St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel* gives the names of 491 authors who from 1792 to 1875 wrote on this subject, and probably twice as many, if not many more, have been added to that number since 1875. The various ideas which have been advanced could not be even named here, though some of the keenest minds have entered the lists and valiantly contended for their respective theories.

But over against all of the assaults which have been made on the Johannean authorship of the book, it continues to carry with it the name of John, the son of Zebedee, the Beloved Disciple. In spite of all controversy over this book, it is known as the Gospel according to John, and down to the end of time, it will be regarded as the genuine writing of the Apostle of that name in the estimation of an increasing number of writers.

As in the case of the Synoptic Gospel, the Fourth makes no claim as to its authorship. While this is no doubt true, the sympathetic reader and

student feels that its author is just below the surface of his book. It has been generally agreed that the author was a Jew, and furthermore, that he was a Palestinian Jew, who repeatedly gives evidence of his personal knowledge of the places and scenes which he presents in his book. In addition to this, he must have been in personal touch with that which he relates, for beyond the shadow of a doubt, he is not merely repeating what he has been told but what he knew himself. And when we examine the list of possible authors among the Twelve, by a process of elimination it becomes evident that he was none other than John, the son of Zebedee, one of the three favoured disciples. Incidentally, it should be mentioned here that while the Synoptists always speak of Jesus' forerunner as "John the Baptist," the author of this Gospel speaks of him simply as "John," since he being the other John of the Gospel history had no need to distinguish himself from the Baptist. Dr. Schaff says: "A review of the array of testimonies, external and internal, drives us to the irresistible conclusion that the Fourth Gospel is really the work of St. John, the trusted and beloved disciple of the Lord. No writer in the first century could have written it but an Apostle, and no Apostle but John, and John himself could not have written it without divine inspiration."¹

John's parents were Zebedee (Mark 1: 19) and

¹ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, p. 714 (Scribner's).

Salome (Mark 15: 40, cf. Matt. 27: 56). Zebedee had hired servants (Mark 1: 20) and also partners in his business as a fisherman (Luke 5: 10). Manifestly he was a man of means. Salome was one of the women who ministered to Jesus of their substance (Luke 8: 3), and went to the sepulchre prepared to embalm His body (Mark 16: 1). John himself owned a home (John 19: 27). He was first a disciple of John the Baptist, by whom Jesus was pointed out to him. After that interview, which he and Andrew had with Jesus, they became His disciples, bringing their respective brothers, James and Peter, to the Master. John was one of the six who accompanied Jesus in His Judæan Ministry, of which he alone gives an account (2: 13-3: 36). Returning with Jesus to Galilee through Samaria, he and his companions went back to their old occupation as fishermen. Early in His Galilean Ministry, Jesus again called these men to follow Him, and He would make them "fishers of men" (Matt. 4: 19; Mark 1: 17). John was one of the three favoured disciples on three occasions (Mark 5: 37; Luke 8: 51; Matt. 17: 1; Mark 9: 2; Luke 9: 28; Matt. 26: 37; Mark 14: 33). A peculiar honour was bestowed upon John by Jesus, when on the cross He committed His mother to his care rather than to that of His as yet unbelieving brothers (John 19: 26-27, cf. 7: 5). In 44 A. D., James, the brother of John, was killed by Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12: 1-2). Meanwhile, Jesus' brethren, James, Joseph, Simon and Judas (Matt. 13: 55), had become be-

lievers in Jesus and were numbered among the disciples (Acts 1: 14), and James became the prominent figure in the Church at Jerusalem. John was one of the three "pillars" who gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul (Gal. 2: 9). In the first part of the Acts, John and Peter are the outstanding persons.

We have no means of knowing when John finally left Jerusalem, but tradition locates him at Ephesus after the death of Peter and Paul in Rome in 67 A. D. His residence in that important capital of the Roman Province of Asia was broken into by his exile to the island of Patmos, in the Ægean Sea, where he had the visions recorded by him in the Revelation, and which probably took place during the reign of Domitian. His death occurred near the end of the first century at Ephesus. Toward the end of his life, it is said he became very feeble and had to be carried to his beloved Church where he could only utter his benediction, "Little children, love one another."

John's object in writing his Gospel is plainly stated: "Many other signs did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (20: 30-31). Clement of Alexandria informs us that, "John, perceiving that the external facts had been made plain in the Gospel, (*i. e.* in the Synoptic Gospels) being urged by his friends, and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel."

John unquestionably had before him the other three Gospels when he wrote, for they all date from before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. and had been in existence and use for many years. As has been seen, John had a definite purpose in writing, yet he just as unquestionably does supplement the Synoptic Gospels, whether he had that in mind or not. If we were dependent upon them only, we would not certainly know that Jesus' ministry was longer than one year; but John mentions three Passovers (2: 13; 6: 4; 13: 1), if not four (5: 1). He alone tells of the Judæan Ministry and this Gospel relates far more than all of the others together of the Master's activity in Judæa. Ninety-two per cent of John's material is not paralleled by the Synoptics, and to that extent is supplemental to them.

Matthew begins his Gospel with the genealogy and birth of Jesus; Mark with the ministry of John the Baptist; Luke goes back to the circumstances leading up to the birth of the Baptist. But John goes back to the infinite depths of eternity and affirms that away back in the beginning (Gen. 1: 1), the Word was, and that subsequently in time, "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (1: 14). The Prologue to this Gospel (1: 1-18), is one of the profoundest pieces of writing in all literature. After the Prologue, John tells of the testimonies borne to Christ by the Baptist, the disciples and His own miracles (1: 10-2: 12). Then he gives his account of Jesus' ministry in Judæa (2: 13-3: 36), in Samaria (4:

1-42), and in Galilee (4: 43-54). From 5: 1-12: 50 the scene is largely in Judæa, except in 6: 1-7: 10, when He was back in Galilee. Then follow the farewell words and sacerdotal prayer of Jesus (13: 1-17: 26). 18: 1-20: 31 tells of Jesus' sufferings and resurrection. Chapter 21 gives what has been called the Epilogue to this Gospel.

The Gospel history, as John had participated in it and over which he had for many decades pondered, when it proceeds from his pen, is naturally tinged by that long reflection. The tendency in the period subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A. D.) had been to dwell more and more upon the historical Jesus of Nazareth, and as a consequence, the thought of many had been turned away from Him as the Divine Christ. There was real danger that in the misty speculations of the latter part of the first century, the real personality and actual existence of Jesus Christ as such should be lost from sight. It was John's task to restore that fading personality and make Him real to the faith of the world, in other words, to write a "spiritual Gospel." Hence, John's might be called the Interpretive Gospel. In this line, the miracles, of which he mentions eight, are called "signs" by him, and they are related for their essential meaning.

After treasuring the words and acts of Jesus so long in his mind, as he gives them, they are told at times in words which were tinged by his own vocabulary. Indeed, it is difficult at times to tell where the words of Jesus end and where

John's begin. John's own memory, assisted by the Holy Spirit, the record of the promise of Whom by the Saviour John alone records (16: 7-15), was the source from which he drew, and when he writes the story, it is in his own words. Dr. Storrs eloquently wrote of this Gospel that, "it is like the sudden gush of the gold, long fused and simmering in the furnace, which, at last, when the door is opened, rushes forth, glowing, incandescent, streaming with light, and precious beyond estimate and compare. So came the Gospel from the heart which held it intimately and so long, and spoke it at last, to be henceforth the inestimable possession of the world forever."²

Questions

1. Give a sketch of John's life as we know it from the Gospel history and the Acts.
2. Read this Gospel again at one sitting and see if you can conceive of any person other than its reputed author who could have written it.
3. Does not this Gospel differentiate itself from the Synoptics by the personal characteristics of its author as none of them does?
4. Have you noticed that this Gospel practically gives the story of the growth of faith on the part of Jesus' disciples and of unbelief on the part of His enemies?
5. What part of this Gospel is to you its outstanding portion?

² H. M. Storrs, *Lectures on the New Testament* (American Tract Society).

CHAPTER VII

THE ACTS

IN the first verse of this book, its author identifies himself with the author of the Third Gospel, which he calls his "former treatise." Both of these books are addressed to the same person, "Theophilus" (Acts 1: 1), "most excellent Theophilus" (Luke 1: 3). The former treatise was "concerning all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day in which he was received up." The Acts continues the history into what is fitly called the Apostolic days. The Apostles were to receive power when the Holy Spirit should come upon them (Luke 24: 49), as He did forty days after the Ascension, that is, on Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4). The story of that great event is related by Luke. With that enduement, the followers of Jesus were to be His "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The book has been called, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit."

The Acts tells the story of that witness-bearing in Jerusalem (Chaps. 1-7), and in Judæa and Samaria (8-12, including in 9: 1-30 the account of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who was to be the most prominent figure in this matter), and unto the uttermost parts of the earth (13-28).

The book is thus the direct sequel to Luke's Gospel, relating the progress of Christianity until it had reached the central city of the world of that day.

It is true that Luke was not actually named as the author of the books now bearing his name until the second century, but there is not to be found the remotest suggestion as to any other author than Luke, the beloved physician. And this identity of authorship is borne out by the peculiarities of style and the general characteristics of the two books. "This author of Acts and the Third Gospel is to be identified with St. Luke the companion, friend and physician of St. Paul."

At Acts 16: 10, the "we" passages begin, showing that the author joined the missionary band at Troas. It is presumable that he had already become a Christian, though we have no means of knowing certainly about this. As has been already intimated, Paul's condition at the time may have called for his services as a physician. They went together to Philippi. The "we" passages do not begin again until the missionaries had come back to that point on the return of their third missionary journey. From thence, Luke accompanied Paul to Jerusalem and subsequently to Rome. From Colossians 4: 14; Philemon 24; 2 Timothy 4: 11, we learn that Luke continued with Paul to the end.

The question as to the sources from which Luke drew the material for his book cannot be passed by, for this has been frequently discussed. His opening verse refers to his "former treatise," the two books overlapping (Luke 24: 50-52; Acts

1: 2-11), and this material he got in his investigations of the Gospel history. From that point on, there are 998 verses in the Acts. Of these, 318 are in the "we" passages; while 366 more are used to recount words and acts of Paul and scenes which the Apostle witnessed, such as the trial, defense and death of Stephen. To these may be added the 36 verses (8: 5-40) which tell of the evangelistic tour of Philip, the account of which he probably secured while he was lodging at Philip's home in Cæsarea (21: 8-10). If these be added up, they show that Luke could write from his own experience and from what he could obtain from Paul and Philip, 720 of his verses, or almost three-quarters of the whole, leaving just 278 that record the acts and words of Peter. How he secured this, we do not know, though his personal contact with Mark in Rome may account for the information given of Peter's ministry in Jerusalem (2: 15-5: 42). Paul could give him the matter presented in 6: 8-8: 4. In this way, Luke secured his material, and it was from personal rather than documentary sources, of which the analytical critics are ever writing. It is a striking case of the "intolerable pedantry of the critics who cannot see the facts for their theories."

The date of Luke's two books is a matter of importance, and may now be considered. He gathered the material for his Gospel while in Cæsarea, during Paul's imprisonment there, and where he had an opportunity to get into immediate touch with it. His contact with Mark when they

were with Paul in Rome would be another source of his information. Acts closes with Paul still a prisoner in Rome, where access to him was apparently an easy matter (Acts 28: 30-31). The "former treatise" must have been finished before he wrote Acts, and it is simply inconceivable that Luke would not have indicated it somehow, if the Apostle had gained his freedom. This makes 63 A. D. the latest possible for the Acts, with his Gospel antedating it by some time.

The objective Luke had in writing the Acts was the further instruction of his friend Theophilus, continuing on from that given in his Gospel. Harnack states that Luke's purpose "was to show how the power of the Spirit of Jesus in the Apostles founded the Primitive Community, called into being the mission to the Gentiles, conducted the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, and set the receptive Gentile world in the place of the Jewish nation, which hardened its heart more and more against the appeal of Christianity."

When considering Luke's Gospel, it was found that several times he relates it to events of contemporaneous history. The Acts has many such references, and one after another, such, for example, as names applied by him to political regions and official positions, have again and again been so vindicated by archæological researches that the burden of proof must certainly rest upon those who accuse him of inaccuracy. The presumption is that he is correct in his references unless proved to the contrary. Robertson declares, "It is not

too much to say that Luke has come out magnificently as the result of archæological research. . . . The rocks in every instance have taken the side of Luke.”¹

Questions

1. Name the sources from which Luke obtained the information given in the Acts.
2. Give an account of Luke's association with Paul.
3. What are the distinctive characteristics of this book?
4. Read the book carefully through again and pick out what you consider to be its greatest section.
5. What evidence is there that Luke was a physician?

¹ *Luke the Historian*, p. 189.

PART TWO: THE EPISTOLARY BOOKS

CHAPTER VIII

THE PAULINE EPISTLES: THEIR AUTHOR

BEFORE beginning the study of the thirteen Pauline Epistles, it would be well to consider briefly their author and his history. The first appearance of the name of Saul of Tarsus in the apostolic history was in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen, when "the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul," while they stoned the proto-martyr to death (Acts 7: 58; 22: 20). That certainly was not a promising record about the young man!

Here and there in his speeches and letters, we find a number of references to himself, which throw light on his past history. Thus, he said, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; but brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers" (Acts 21: 39; 22: 3). He also informs us that he was "of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee" (Phil. 3: 5; Acts 23: 6; 26: 5). At a critical moment, he claimed Roman citizenship, "I am a Roman born" (Acts 22: 28). He does

not anywhere make any reference to his parents, which raises the presumption that they died during his boyhood. He had a married sister in Jerusalem (Acts 23: 16), and that may have been one of the reasons for his going there. The most important purpose, of course, was that he might receive rabbinical instruction.

The young Cilician Jew enrolled at Jerusalem in the school of Gamaliel, one of the most noted Rabbis. Under that training, "I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1: 14). His zeal for his Jewish faith marked him as one of its champions, and led him to persecute the followers of Jesus (Acts 8: 3; 22: 19-20; 26: 9-12). Though he "did it ignorantly through unbelief" (1 Tim. 1: 13), and "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26: 9-12), the memory of his persecuting zeal fairly haunted him to the end.

But suddenly, the persecutor was halted in his mad career, for God had other plans for his life (Gal. 1: 15-16; Acts 9: 15-16; 22: 15-16, 21), and he became as zealous a servant of Jesus Christ as he had been a persecutor of His followers (Acts 9: 1-22). His conversion, possibly in 34 A. D., as he neared Damascus, was one of the most momentous events of all history. From that instant he was an absolutely changed man. So he came to Damascus "and he was three days without

sight, and neither did eat nor drink ” (Acts 9: 9). There was never the slightest doubt in his mind but that Jesus Christ had appeared to him. It was an objective appearance, and not mere imagination, for he wrote, speaking of the appearances of the risen Christ, “ Last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also ” (1 Cor. 15: 8).

With his sight restored and having been baptized in his new faith, he “ proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God ” (Acts 9: 20). After a brief stay in Damascus, he went away into Arabia for three years (Gal. 1: 16–17). Saul needed time to re-adjust all his thinking. Where the place was to which he went, no one can tell, but when he came back to Damascus, doubtless having received during that time some of the revelations of which he writes (Gal. 1: 12; 2 Cor. 12: 1), he “ confounded the Jews that dwelt in Damascus, proving that this is the Christ ” (Acts 9: 22). Immediately, the former persecutor became the persecuted and he had to flee from Damascus (Acts 9: 23–25; 2 Cor. 11: 32–33). Where should he go now? Jerusalem, naturally, was that place and so he went there (Acts 9: 26–30). But his stay there was only fifteen days long, for persecution arose against him there (Acts 22: 17–21; Gal. 1: 18–24). Again he had to flee for his life, and this time it was to Syria and Cilicia, where his old home Tarsus was located. How long the Apostle remained in this region cannot be certainly ascertained, but it must have been some years, in which the churches of Syria and

Cilicia were founded. We may be sure that Saul spent this time in the service of his new-found faith (Acts 15: 41; Gal. 1: 21-24).

Some time later, Barnabas came to Tarsus seeking for Paul to come to Antioch and help in the work which had developed there (Acts 11: 19-26). During the year they spent together at this second center of Christianity, the followers of Jesus came to be known as Christians, probably given to them in derision at first, since the name of Christ was so often named by His followers. It was at this point that the first formal missionary enterprise took place. A divine call was the occasion of the First Missionary Journey (Acts 13: 2-3). On it Barnabas and Saul accompanied by Mark crossed over to the island of Cyprus (13: 4-12), which they traversed. When they reached the western end of Cyprus, they crossed over to the mainland of Asia Minor, landing at Perga in Pamphylia. Passing from there to the north, they established churches at Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (13: 13-14: 27). It was at Perga that Mark left the missionaries and returned to his home in Jerusalem. It should also be noted that hereafter Saul is known as Paul, his Roman name, and not as Saul, his Jewish name, and that his name precedes that of Barnabas, he becoming the leader of the band. At length they returned to Antioch, where they reported concerning their journey and had a great welcome (14: 27).

The Second Missionary Journey began not long after the Council at Jerusalem, at which Paul was

given recognition as the missionary to the Gentiles and where he secured his victory for freedom for the Gentiles from compliance with the requirements of the Mosaic Law (Acts 15: 1–35; Gal. 2: 1–10). Presently, Paul proposed to Barnabas that they go and “visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare” (Acts 15: 36–41). Then came the sad rupture between them over Mark, which ended their association together. On this journey, Paul took with him Silas, going north from Antioch, visiting the churches of Syria and Cilicia and also those established on the former journey (Acts 15: 40–16:5). At Lystra, Timothy was added to their company. When they reached Pisidian Antioch, they passed north into Galatia, establishing the churches in that region (Gal. 4: 13–14), in spite of the illness that overtook him there. Passing on west under some manifest divine guidance, they came to Troas, where Dr. Luke joined their company, and where they received the well-known and epoch-making Macedonian call which took them over to Europe across the Ægean Sea (Acts 16: 6–10).

With Philippi as the starting point in Europe, they went west to Thessalonica (Acts 16: 6–18: 22). From there they travelled on to Berea and Athens and then Corinth, where Paul remained for eighteen months (18: 11). It was during this residence in Corinth that the Apostle wrote his two Epistles to the Thessalonians. The work at Corinth was very successful, even though some great prob-

lems arose in connection with it, which will be noted in studying the Epistles to the Church there. Finally, Paul left Corinth on the return of the Second Missionary Journey, going by way of Ephesus, to which place he promised to return "if God will" (Acts 18: 21). Finally, he landed at Cæsarea on his way to Jerusalem, where he "saluted the church, and went down to Antioch" (18: 22).

The stay at Antioch was brief, and then he went forth alone on his Third Missionary Journey, which brought him, after he had gone through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, to Ephesus in accordance with his promise (Acts 18: 22-23; 19: 1). The stay at Ephesus was three years long (Acts 20: 31), years that were wonderfully fruitful and far-reaching in their effects (19: 26). During this time, Paul wrote his Epistle to the Galatians (57 A. D.) and the First to the Corinthians. Leaving Ephesus after Pentecost of that year, he went by way of Troas over into Macedonia, where he wrote his Second Epistle to Corinth. The rest of the summer was spent by the indefatigable missionary in his work as far west as Illyricum (Rom. 15: 19), and late in the fall he came to Corinth, where he remained for three months, during which time he wrote his Epistle to the Romans (Acts 20: 2-3).

Meanwhile, the churches of Macedonia and Achaia were completing the offering for the poor saints at Jerusalem, which Paul and others were to take to its destination. Instead of going direct

to Syria by water as he had intended, because of a plot against his life, he travelled by land to Philippi, where he spent Passover of 58 (March 27). At that point, Luke rejoined Paul and gives us a detailed account of the journey to Jerusalem (Acts 20: 6–21: 17). It is a touching and thrilling narrative that tells of the warnings given to Paul of what he might expect at Jerusalem, and his heroic answer: "I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself" (Acts 20: 22–24). When they reached Cæsarea, and the disciples besought him not to go on to Jerusalem, "Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (21: 13).

Shortly they reached the holy city, where their fears for Paul were realized, when he was rescued by the Roman soldiers from the murderous assault of the Jews. Then followed two weary years of waiting at Cæsarea, where he had been taken by the chief captain for protection against the plots of his own countrymen and delivered into the hands of Felix, the governor of the province. Space here does not permit to detail the events following, except to note that finally, after the perilous voyage to Rome, the prisoner of Jesus Christ was delivered into the custody of the

Prætorian Guard in the spring of 61 A. D., to await the decision of Nero, to whom, as a Roman citizen's right, he had appealed (25: 11).

Then followed two years more of imprisonment in his own hired house in Rome (28: 30–31), during which time he wrote his four Prison Epistles—Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians. At last he was in Rome. Luke's history carries us no further than this. But unquestionably, Paul was released, probably in the spring of 63 A. D., and spent some years of freedom. How we could wish for a detailed account of his movements for the next four years, but we are dependent on the incidental references to these in his Pastoral Epistles, where the matter will be noted. Finally, he met martyrdom in the spring of 68 A. D. He

“Climbed the steep ascent of heaven
Through peril, toil and pain,”

and was “with Christ; for it was very far better.”

As to his Epistles which we will now proceed to study, we find that in them he names 78 different individuals 154 times, showing that he had close personal relations with many of his friends scattered widely over his immense field of labour. What a prayer-list he must have had! What his service to his Lord cost him up to the time of his writing of Second Corinthians is summarized by him in that Epistle (11: 23–28). No wonder that he became one of the most important figures of all history!

The secret of his life from the time of his arrest by the Risen Christ on his way to Damascus is to be found in his conscious relation to Him. He was "in Christ" and Christ was in him. That fact begot in him an unflinching faith which sustained him in all of the subsequent experiences of his life. He never for a moment regretted that he had turned his back on all his old Judaism might have given him. He counted "all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things and do count them but refuse."

Questions

1. In what connection does Paul's name first occur in the apostolic history?
2. Why did young Saul go to Jerusalem?
3. How much territory did Paul cover in his three missionary journeys? (Rom. 15: 19.)
4. Why was Saul's conversion such a great historical event?
5. Of what use to him was his Roman citizenship?

Books on Paul recommended for further study:

The Man from Tarsus, Lineberger, L. O. (Revell).

Epochs in the Life of Paul, Robertson (Revell).

Paul's Secret of Power, Walker, R. H.

Paul of Tarsus, Glover, T. R.

The Character of Paul, Jefferson, C. E. (Revell).

The Life of Paul, Robertson, B. W.

CHAPTER IX

THE PAULINE EPISTLES: THEIR GROUPING

THE Epistles of the Apostle Paul consist of four distinct groups, which in point of time are separated from each other by a period of about five years. These groups are:

- I. The Epistles of the Second Missionary Journey. 52–53 A. D.
 1. First Thessalonians written at Corinth. 52 A. D.
 2. Second Thessalonians also written at Corinth. 53 A. D.
- II. The Epistles of the Third Missionary Journey. 57–58 A. D.
 3. Galatians written at Ephesus. 57 A. D.
 4. First Corinthians written at Ephesus. 57 A. D.
 6. Romans written at Corinth. 58 A. D.
- III. The Epistles of the First Roman Imprisonment. 62–63 A. D.
 7. Colossians written at Rome. 62 A. D.
 8. Philemon written at Rome. 62 A. D.
 9. Ephesians written at Rome. 62 A. D.
 10. Philippians written at Rome. 63 A. D.

IV. The Pastoral Epistles. 67 A. D.

11. First Timothy written from Macedonia.
67 A. D.
12. Titus written *en route* to Nicopolis in Epirus. 67 A. D.
13. Second Timothy written in Rome. 67 A. D.

It will be found that each of these groups has certain outstanding features, which will be noted as they are taken up successively.

Questions

1. Name the four groups of the Pauline Epistles.
2. Where were the various Epistles written?
3. Which of these groups was the most important, and why?
4. How much time separates these groups?
5. Would those intervals of time affect the Apostles' language?

CHAPTER X

THE EPISTLES OF THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY. 52-53 A. D.

THE Epistles of this journey, First and Second Thessalonians, have a peculiar interest because they are the earliest of the Pauline Epistles. Furthermore, they follow, in time, the Epistle of James, which is herein held to be the first book of the New Testament As It Stands. Paul, when he wrote these letters, had been a Christian for some eighteen years. These Epistles, as in each other case, grew out of circumstances which had arisen in his work. He was on European soil, far away from the influence of the Judaizers, who had been antagonizing his work and over whom he had gained a signal victory in establishing his cardinal doctrine that Jews and Gentiles alike are justified not by the deeds of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. As we shall see, the outstanding teaching of this group of Epistles is the Kingship of Jesus and His Second Coming.

Twenty-four times in the First Epistle and twenty-one times in the Second, the title "Lord" is applied to Jesus. This manifestly was the basis of the charge made against them in Thessalonica: "These all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus" (Acts 17: 7). And closely connected with the Kingship

of our Lord Jesus, the Apostle preached also His coming again (1 Thess. 1: 10; 2: 19; 3: 13; 4: 15-17; 5: 23; 2 Thess. 1: 7-10; 2: 1-8). It is this latter fact which has been the cause of calling these two Epistles the Eschatological Group, for they deal thus with the doctrine of the "last things" (Greek, *eschatos*). There is no question but that to the mind and expectation of the early Church, the "coming of the Lord" was a very live thought, and the event was expected to take place soon, even in that generation, as certain words of our Lord Himself seem to imply (Matt. 24: 34; 16: 28; Luke 21: 32). We will find that one of the purposes of the Second Epistle of this group was to correct certain errors that had arisen in connection with this matter.

Questions

1. Why is this group called the Eschatological Group?
2. Verify the figures given as to the number of times Jesus is called Lord in this group.
3. Where does this group come in point of time in the New Testament?
4. Who are associated with the Apostle in this group and why?
5. What was the principal cause of disturbance in the Thessalonian Church?

CHAPTER XI

FIRST THESSALONIANS

THESSALONICA, now known as Saloniki, was located on the Egnatian Highway, about one hundred miles west of Philippi. Leaving Philippi immediately after his outrageous treatment in that city, the Apostle passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia came to Thessalonica. This important city was situated at the head of the Thermaic Bay, an arm of the Ægean Sea. There was a considerable Jewish element in this place then, as there is today. At Philippi, the Jews were comparatively few in number and only had a place for prayer and that outside of the city, but in Thessalonica they had a synagogue. "And Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures, opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ" (Acts 17: 2-3). The result was that "some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few" (17: 4). Matters moved quickly and the missionaries were compelled to carry on their work

outside the synagogue, which they did for a few weeks.

This aroused the bitter opposition of the Jews, who at length gathered a mob from the rabble of the city and attempted to seize them. Failing to find the missionaries, they dragged Jason, their host, and others before the magistrates and charged them with sedition. The missionaries were characterized as "these that have turned the world upside down." The outcome was that Jason and some of his fellow believers were bound over to keep the peace (17: 5-9). Under the circumstances, the missionaries could not continue their work there, and that night they left for Berea, a city about fifty miles to the southwest. The work in this city was immediately most promising, for they "were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (17: 5-14). As soon as the news of this work reached Thessalonica, the Jews came to interrupt it. And again Paul had to flee onward, and this time it was to Athens.

While waiting at Athens, Timothy came to Paul with news which led the Apostle to send him back to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3: 1-3). After a short stay in Athens (Acts 17: 18-34), where his work secured only meagre results, the Apostle went on to Corinth, where Silas and Timothy presently joined him (18: 5), bringing full information about conditions in the Thessalonian Church (1 Thess. 3: 6-7), thus relieving his anxiety somewhat. The

principal element in that Church was Gentile (1 Thess. 1: 9-10), though it contained a Jewish element also. Paul had made two unsuccessful attempts to revisit them (2: 17-18).

The news received comforted him and doubtless gave a great impetus to his preaching in Corinth (Acts 18: 5-6). Immediately, the Apostle wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians, expressing his joy over their progress in spite of the difficulties there, and dealing with the problems which had arisen, speaking most candidly. Heathen vices still clung to some of them, while erroneous views of the Second Advent had disturbed others. Death had removed some, and their friends were distressed because they thought that the dead would not participate in the blessings of that great event.

This Epistle was written from Corinth probably late in 52 A. D. It has two well-marked parts: The Historical (1: 1-3: 13), and the Practical (4: 1-5: 28). Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy are associated with Paul in the salutation, not as joint authors with him, but as those who had been with him during his work in Thessalonica. It is interesting to note that the Thessalonian believers were organized into a church (1: 1), that they had a regular ministry (5: 12-13), and that at a regular meeting of their Church this Epistle was to be read (5: 27). We thus have presented to us a Church with regularly appointed officers who had a recognized authority over their brethren, and who were to be accorded the proper esteem for their work (5: 12-13). It is also to be noted that

prayer is specifically addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 3: 11; 2 Thess. 3: 16). And not only this but also He is named coördinately with God the Father in this matter of prayer. In no place in all of the Apostle's Epistles is there to be found a clearer recognition of the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions

1. Note how often Jesus is called "Lord" in this Epistle.
2. Tell about Paul's experience in Thessalonica.
3. What peculiar disorder had arisen in the Thessalonian Church?
4. Look up the history of Thessalonica so far as you may be able.
5. Read the Epistle over again and tell your impressions of it.

CHAPTER XII

SECOND THESSALONIANS

WE have no means of knowing who carried the first letter to the Thessalonians, but ere long there came to the Apostle at Corinth a report which showed that it had been received with good results. Definite progress had been made by the Thessalonian Christians and that, in spite of the afflictions and persecutions to which they had been subjected. Those who had been distressed by the death of dear ones had been comforted. On the other hand, the idea of an immediate coming of the Lord had taken a firmer hold on the minds of some. They had become so possessed with this idea that they had ceased their usual labours and in idle expectancy were awaiting the event. This had resulted in more or less disorder. "For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies" (3: 11).

This state of affairs had been aggravated by a forged letter under Paul's name, which had taught the immediate coming of the Lord, augmenting the disturbance in that line. Paul urges them not "to be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand" (2: 2). In endorsement of the present letter, he writes, "The salutation of me, Paul, with

mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle; so I write " (3: 17).

It is impossible to tell just how much time had elapsed since the writing of the former letter, but some months must have intervened between the two. This second letter was also written from Corinth, and as in the case of the first, in the names of Paul, Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy, who had been associated with him in the work at Thessalonica. It is interesting to note that after this time, the name of Silas does not appear in Paul's company. Some years subsequently, he became associated with Peter (1 Pet. 5: 12), and was probably his amanuensis in writing his First Epistle, and possibly took it to its destination.

The design of this Epistle was to rectify the serious error into which many had fallen in regard to the Second Advent, and in this connection to warn them against the idle and disorderly state which marked the lives of some of their number. At the same time, he praises and commends the obedient for the progress they had made, exhorting them to continue in that way. One can feel the heartbeats of the Apostle in the letters he writes to these Thessalonian Christians, whose faith had cost them so dearly.

After his opening salutations and introduction (1: 1-12), he writes about the "Man of Sin," correcting the erroneous ideas which had arisen among them about the coming of the Lord, telling them of events which must take place before it would happen (2: 1-12). This is followed by a

hortatory section (2: 13–3: 15), and a benediction and conclusion (3: 17–18).

Looking back over this Epistle, it should be noted that it does not make any mention of the controversy that Paul had been waging with the Judaizers in Asia Minor concerning the means of salvation. The Apostle placed in the forefront of his preaching in Thessalonica the Kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was on the basis of this that the charge was made against the missionaries that “These all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus” (Acts 17: 7).

Questions

1. What was the basis of the charge against the missionaries?
2. What part did the expectation of an early coming again of the Lord play in the life of the early Church generally?
3. Have you noted the solicitude of the Apostle about his converts?
4. What do you regard as the choicest part of this Epistle?
5. Note carefully the prayers to our Lord Jesus in this letter.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EPISTLES OF THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY. 57-58 A. D.

Just about five years elapsed between this group of Epistles and the former. The outstanding characteristic of these Epistles is their teaching concerning the doctrine of Salvation, hence it is called in theological language the Soteriological Group (from the Greek word *soteria* meaning "salvation"). Four Epistles are contained in this group, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans. The first two of these were written at Ephesus, the third in Macedonia, and the fourth at Corinth. It is the first and last of these which deal particularly with the question of salvation. The Epistles to the Corinthians deal rather with practical problems than with matters of doctrine.

In the period intervening between this group and the last, the vital question of the relation of Gentile Christians to the Jewish law, whether they should be compelled to observe its requirements or not, was fought out by the Apostle Paul. The Judaizers would impose on all alike the keeping of the Mosaic Law. Paul fought this matter to the finish and won the victory. Galatians and Romans present the cause of freedom in Christ Jesus from all observance of the ceremonial law. Because the

Epistles to the Corinthians came between those two Epistles in point of time of their composition, they are naturally in this group.

This period was a tense time in the life and work of Paul. He fought his enemies, step by step, but in spite of every effort they put forth, he delivered Christianity from becoming merely a Jewish sect, and made it a religion for Jews and Gentiles alike on the same basis of faith in Jesus Christ as the only requirement for salvation (Gal. 2: 1-10; Acts 15: 1-29). Humanly speaking, Paul made Christianity a world religion. He had himself been lifted out of the bondage of Judaism into the freedom of Christ Jesus (Gal. 5: 1). From the moment when he saw the risen Christ on his way to Damascus he gave his life to the proclamation of his new-found faith, carrying it out into the Gentile world.

Questions

1. Why is this group of Epistles called the Soteriological Group?
2. What Epistles does it include and where were they written?
3. How do the Epistles to the Corinthians come to be in this group?
4. Give an account of Paul's movements since the former group.
5. Which Epistle of this group do you regard as the greatest, and why?

CHAPTER XIV

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

ALMOST immediately the question of the location of the Galatian Churches confronts us. Were they the Churches founded by Paul and Barnabas on the First Missionary Journey, as Professor Ramsay contended, or were they located in what is known as North Galatia, the original Roman province of that name, and founded by Paul on the Second Missionary Journey? Paul plainly states, "Ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you the first (Margin of R. V. "former") time." Ramsay contends that Paul was taken with prostrating fever on the malarial coast of Pamphylia when they landed there from Cyprus on the First Journey, and that they went up into the highlands of central Asia Minor so that he might recover. But the Acts (13: 13-14: 28) does not give any support to the idea that Paul's preaching at Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Derbe and Lystra was thus in a sense accidental. Nor was he received at any of those places "as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus" (Gal. 4: 14). The North Galatian theory, which this book defends, is that Paul was overtaken with the attack of his "thorn in the flesh," whatever it may have been, on the Second Journey,

as they went through "the region of Phrygia and Galatia" (Acts 16: 6). Instead of giving his time to recovery from his ailment and in spite of it, the unconquerable missionary utilized the opportunity to preach the Gospel to the people. And the Galatians instead of being repelled by his physical condition gave immediate response to his preaching, not being affected by the manifestly prostrating character of his illness (Gal. 4: 13-14).

Evidently, the Apostle's plan was to go from thence to Asia, the Roman Province of that name, of which Ephesus was the Capital (Acts 18: 6-8), but under divine guidance they came to Troas where their band, which included Silas and Timothy, was increased by one, and he none other than Luke, "the beloved Physician," for whose services Paul had need at that time.

The Galatians were descendants of the Gauls who invaded Greece and Asia Minor about three centuries before the Christian era. Years later, they were defeated and confined to the northern part of Phrygia, to which was given the name of Galatia, whose three principal cities were Pessinus, Tavium and Ancyra. With characteristic readiness, the Galatians embraced the faith taught by Paul, and later, as we will see, just as readily were falling away from it. On his Third Missionary Journey, Paul revisited Galatia (Acts 18: 23) on his way to Ephesus, where he spent three of the most successful years of his ministry (Acts 20: 31). It was toward the end of his Ephesian ministry that the Apostle was astounded to hear

that under the influence of Judaizing teachers, the Galatians were actually in danger of turning away from him and the Gospel which he had preached among them (Gal. 1: 6-9).

The Apostle's opponents assailed not only his apostolic authority, but also the Gospel which he preached. Immediately upon receipt of the distressing news, of which he apparently had had no previous intimation, he wrote this Epistle. Without any of the usual words of praise and thanksgiving to be found in his letters, Paul dashes right into his subject, the defense of the two controverted points, his apostolic authority and his teaching. "Paul, an apostle, not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead" (1: 1). Furthermore, he claims the same divine source for his teaching, "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel, which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (1: 11-12).

After his salutation and expression of wonder at their speedy falling away (1: 1-10), he writes of his former hostility to Jesus Christ (1: 13-14), and his conversion (15-16), and briefly of the events following his call (1: 17-2: 14), which led to the definite recognition of his apostleship to the Gentiles by "James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars" (2: 6-10). The transition to the second point at issue, the means

of salvation (2: 15–31), is followed by the proof of the doctrine that justification is by faith (3: 1–5: 12). Practical exhortations growing out of the foregoing are given in 5: 13–6: 10. At 6: 11, Paul takes the pen from his amanuensis and in large characters, brings his fiery and tumultuous letter to a close, flinging out the burning challenge to his opponents “Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus”; and he ends his letter with a benediction.

This Epistle was written from Ephesus near the close of his residence there and probably just on the eve of his departure at the time of the Ephesian riot (Acts 19: 23–20: 1), 57 A. D. If Ramsay’s South Galatian theory were correct, the date would be several years before that, but that would necessitate separating it far from its closely related and kindred Epistle to the Romans.

Questions

1. Where were the Galatian Churches located?
2. What are the two main points treated in this Epistle?
3. Who were the Apostle’s opponents in Galatia?
4. How did the Apostle happen to preach the Gospel to the Galatians?
5. Where did Paul get the Gospel he preached?

CHAPTER XV

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

CORINTH in its earlier days had been the head of what was known as the Achæan League. In 146 B. C., it was destroyed by the Romans, but about a hundred years later, it was rebuilt by Julius Cæsar and made a Roman colony. It was situated on the isthmus connecting the Peloponnesus with Attica. Under the new auspices, it forged ahead and became a great commercial center. Its seaports were Lechæum and Cenchrea, on either side of the isthmus, through which a vast commerce passed, a kind of ship-canal connecting them. Trade from east and west continually moved through this growing city. It attracted a cosmopolitan population, and was noted alike for its magnificence and its immorality. On the Acrocorinthus, rising two thousand feet, was located the temple of Venus Aphrodite, where two thousand priestesses ministered to the basest passions of men. Its very name became the synonym of the most unblushing vices, for to corinthianize was to play the part of a roué.

It was on his Second Missionary Journey that the Apostle came to Corinth from Athens late in

52 A. D. His work at Athens had not met with much success (Acts 17: 34). In Corinth, he came in contact with Aquila and Priscilla, with whom he made his abode, kindred trade and possibly also faith bringing them together. The Apostle seems to have been somewhat depressed after his experience in Athens, but presently Silas and Timothy came to him from Thessalonica and their coming stimulated him in his work, for he "was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ" (18: 5). Working at his trade during the week, he made use of the synagogue meetings every sabbath. This increased activity provoked the opposition of the Corinthian Jews, and Paul in a somewhat spectacular manner said, "Henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." But even the chief ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, was one of his converts. At that critical moment, the Apostle had a vision in which the Lord said to him, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (18: 9). One of the converts lived close to the synagogue and that became the center of his operations. For a year and a half, Paul continued his work of preaching and teaching.

A change of the proconsulship was seized upon by the Jews for an effort to stop his work officially. But they overreached themselves to their own discomfiture (Acts 18: 12-17). At length, the Apostle left there, crossing the sea to Ephesus, taking his friends Aquila and Priscilla with him (18: 18-21).

There he spoke in the synagogue and was immediately importuned to remain, but after a promise to return there, "if God will," he sailed to Cæsarea. A very brief stay was made in Jerusalem, and thence he went back to Syrian Antioch. After spending some time there, he started out on his Third Missionary Journey, which brought him eventually to Ephesus late in 54 A. D., where he laboured for three years (Acts 20: 31).

The Church of Corinth was largely Gentile in its composition for the Apostle could write, "Ye know that ye were Gentiles," though there was a Jewish element also. While the rank and file of the Church there were of humble ranks, there were some of higher circles, such as Crispus the former ruler of the Synagogue (Acts 18: 8), and Erastus the treasurer of the city (Rom. 16: 23) and Gaius the Apostle's host. Not long before Paul came to Ephesus, Apollos had become connected with the Corinthian Church (Acts 18: 24-28), and did an important work in it.

It is well-nigh impossible to determine surely just what contact the Apostle may have had with Corinth during his Ephesian residence, but it seems as though he made at least one trip there. But the news that was the occasion of this letter seems to have come to him wholly unprepared for it. Members of the family of one Chloe brought the first direct intimation he had of a distressing condition of affairs. At this juncture Apollos may have come. Then a committee from the Corinthian Church, consisting of Stephanas, Fortunatus and

Achaicus, brought a letter which submitted to him some perplexing questions that had arisen. There were divisions in the Church and names were used as party leaders so that it was said, "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1 Cor. 1: 12). There had also been a case of flagrant immorality (5: 1-8). Some have thought that Paul had already written a letter about this case (5: 9). Furthermore, there had been some enemies of the Apostle, who had made a personal attack upon his motives and sincerity, and incidentally on his apostleship. They had evidently set themselves to undermine his authority. In Galatia, Paul's apostleship and teaching had been openly called in question. But here the attack was insidious and personal, and therefore all the harder to meet and repel.

This Epistle has such diversified contents that it is difficult to give an outline of it. The greeting and thanksgiving occupy the beginning (1: 1-9). The party spirit in the Church and the Apostle's justification of his method of teaching follows (1: 10-4: 21). Next he deals with the disorders in the Church (5: 1-6: 20). His answers to the question presented to him occupy the 7th to the 15th chapters. The balance (16: 1-24) includes the directions concerning the collections for the poor saints at Jerusalem, personal messages and exhortations and salutations with an autographic conclusion. His answers to the questions submitted include two of the outstanding passages of all of his writings, the eulogy on love (13: 1-13),

and his eloquent dissertation on the resurrection (15: 1-58).

The place of writing is easily determined, for he had determined to remain at Ephesus until after Pentecost (16: 8) and it was on the eve of that date when he wrote. He came to Ephesus late in 54 A. D., and had been there for three years (Acts 20: 31). His plan was to go to Macedonia and from thence to Corinth. The date accordingly was previous to Pentecost of 57 A. D. In this Epistle, the Apostle appears as a strange mixture of tenderness and severity. "At one time, he rebukes with impassioned severity; at another, he entreats with the tenderness of a loving mother mourning over her erring children."

Questions

1. Wherein did the attack on Paul in Corinth differ from that in Galatia?
2. What peculiar problems had arisen at Corinth?
3. Does the Apostle seem unduly severe in his strictures on women at Corinth and why?
4. What change did the Apostle make in his preaching at Corinth from what he had done at Athens? (2: 1-5.)
5. Note carefully that it was not heretical beliefs but conduct that marked the Church at Corinth.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

THE First Epistle was carried to its destination by Titus some time before Pentecost of 57 A. D. Naturally, the Apostle was anxious to learn what effect it had had. It had dealt with a serious situation and between hopes and fears as to the results of its reception, he was sorely distressed. Meanwhile, affairs at Ephesus had culminated in the riot of the silversmiths (Acts 19: 23–41). When quiet came, the Apostle gathered the Christians and “took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia” (20: 1). It was his hope that when he reached Troas he might find Titus there with news from Corinth. But even though an opportunity presented itself to him there, “I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother: but taking leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia” (2 Cor. 2: 12–13). Somewhere in Macedonia he met Titus, possibly at Philippi, and the news he received allayed his distress of mind and comforted him greatly. But while the majority responded to his letter, there was still a vigorous faction that refused to recognize the Apostle’s authority. Put on the defensive, they brought forward new charges against Paul, calling

in question his sincerity and making insinuations as to his course of action generally.

The Apostle himself was put on the defensive by their accusations, which could not be ignored. Their impugning of his motives sorely wounded him. Gloag says: "The calumnies of his opponents had wounded him deeply, especially as they touched points where his best intentions had been twisted by them into the very opposite. He wrote under great excitement, the throbs of which are felt throughout the Epistle."¹ While his gratitude over the obedience of the majority is expressed, he does not hesitate to warn the hostile element that they will compel him to use extreme measures if they continue their opposition. He writes, "I have said beforehand, and I do say beforehand, as when I was present the second time, so now, being absent, to them that have sinned heretofore, and to all the rest, that, if I come again, I will not spare" (13: 2).

Writing as he did, under great stress of feeling, it is not strange that this Epistle should be somewhat difficult to outline. The development of thought is not systematic and logical. The extremely personal character of the Epistle largely accounts for this. Roughly speaking, there are three main parts: I. The hortatory section (1: 1-7: 16). II. Directions about the offering for the relief of the needy in Jerusalem (8: 1-9: 15). III. Severe and threatening vindication of himself

¹ Paton J. Gloag, *Introduction to Pauline Epistles*, p. 211 (T. & T. Clark).

to the impenitent portion of the Church (10: 1-13: 14). Just here it should be noted that there are some who think that the present Epistle is really made up of two separate letters. However, there are no manuscripts which give the Epistle in any other form than at present.

This Epistle reveals more of the character of the Apostle than any other. Though he may seem egotistical at times in it, yet he was not led to write from any unworthy motives. He simply had to defend himself against malicious attacks. No more moving section can be found than that contained in 11: 16-33, showing what his service of Jesus Christ had cost him. From these two Epistles to the Corinthians, we can understand his words, "Besides those things which are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches" (11: 28). Dr. Schaff says: "None of his other letters give us so clear a view of his noble, tender heart, the sufferings and joys of his inward life, his alternations of feelings, his anxieties and struggles for the welfare of his churches."² Canon Farrar has a noteworthy comment on the two Epistles to the Corinthians in which he says: "The First Epistle shows us how he applied the principles of Christianity to daily life in dealing with the flagrant aberrations of a most unsatisfactory church: his Second opens a window into the very emotions of his heart, and is the agitated self-defense of a wounded and loving spirit to ungrate-

² Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, p. 344 (Scribner's).

ful and erring, yet not wholly lost, or wholly incorrigible souls.”³

This Epistle was written in the summer of 57 A. D., from some place in Macedonia, after he had met Titus with his report from Corinth. He says, “I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down” (13: 10). And in order that the letter might have time for its designed purpose, he spent several months “round about even unto Illyricum” in his work (Rom. 15: 19), reaching Corinth probably in December, 57 A. D. (Acts 20: 2-3).

Questions

1. Read these two letters to the Corinthians over again and note that he names thirty-nine persons in them.
2. What light do these Epistles throw on the character of Paul?
3. Note carefully the words of 8: 9 and the apostrophe of 9: 15.
4. What had been characteristic of the giving of the Churches of Macedonia?
5. What should be our rule in the matter of giving?

³ F. W. Farrar, *Life and Work of St. Paul*, p. 403 (Dutton).

CHAPTER XVII

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

WHILE the Apostle was still at Ephesus, he formed the plan of going to Rome (Acts 19: 21). Ephesus was one of the most important of the capitals of the Roman Provinces. Paul's three years there doubtless showed him the supreme importance of work in such places. Contact with Rome from Ephesus was constant. How natural that his thoughts should turn to the importance of the Imperial City and its relation to the Roman world. It was a strategic point to be occupied.

It is impossible to tell when Christianity entered the eternal city. There were "sojourners from Rome" in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, who were witnesses of the event that happened there that day (Acts 2: 10). Doubtless some of them heard Peter's message and were among the three thousand who were fruits of that Apostle's great sermon. Anyhow, it was impossible but that at an early date Christianity had disciples in Rome. The Roman Catholic Church claims that Peter founded the Church in Rome in the second year of Claudius (42 A. D.), and that he presided over it as its bishop for twenty-five years. But there is not the slightest intimation in the New Testament

that he ever visited that city. In 44 A. D., Peter was imprisoned in Jerusalem by Herod Agrippa (Acts 12: 1), and he was there at the council of Jerusalem in 50 A. D. (Acts 15). In 64 A. D., Peter wrote his First Epistle from Babylon on the Euphrates. And Paul, in his Epistles written in Rome, makes no reference to his presence there in 62 and 63 A. D.

Paul planned to go to Rome after he had taken the offering of the Macedonian churches "for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem" (Rom. 15: 22-32). In this letter, he writes that he had oftentimes purposed to go to see them (1: 13) "having these many years a longing to come unto you" (15: 23). And when he heard at Corinth that Phœbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea, the eastern seaport of that city, was about to go to Rome on some matter of business, he determined to send a letter to them by her hand. The immediate occasion of writing this letter at this time was this opportunity to send it to its destination.

The composition of the church at Rome was largely Gentile (1: 5, 13; 11: 13; 15: 15-16), though there was also a Jewish element in it. Jowett affirms that "the Roman church appeared to be at once Jewish and Gentile—Jewish in feeling, Gentile in origin." There are references to three different places of meeting for worship (16: 5, 14, 15) among the Roman Christians. The faith and obedience of the Roman Christians were widely known (1: 8; 16: 15). Some of those who

are saluted had been Christians before his conversion (16: 7).

This Epistle was written from Corinth during the three months Paul spent there in the winter of 57–58 A. D. He was at Philippi on the following March 27th, for he spent the Passover at that place (Acts 20: 6). We may then date this Epistle somewhat more exactly than any other from him at about February, 58 A. D., for he was just on the eve of starting to Jerusalem with the Macedonian offering (15: 25).

The theme of this Epistle is given by Dr. Warfield as "Salvation by a God-provided righteousness attainable by all who believe" (1: 16). The introduction occupies 1: 1–17. Then follows the doctrinal development and defense of its theme (1: 18–11: 36). Exhortations based on the previous section extend from 12: 1–15: 13, while the balance (15: 14–16: 27) forms the conclusion. Tertius, of whom we know nothing else, was Paul's amanuensis on this occasion (16: 22).

Much has been written about the design of the Apostle in this Epistle. Dr. Gloag writes: "The object of the letter was general, not special. Paul had no special errors to correct, no disorders to reform. The Roman church was not connected with him, as other churches, by personal visitation. The design of the Epistle was to impart to the Roman Christians a correct view of Christianity." It is the Apostle's greatest letter in every sense of the word. The eighth chapter is one of the outstanding chapters of the New Testament. The

two main portions of the letter end with apostrophic conclusions which should be noted (11: 33-36; 16: 25-27). Martin Luther called it, "The true masterpiece of the New Testament," and affirmed that, "it never can be too much or too well read or studied; and the more it is handled, the more precious it becomes."

Twenty-seven persons are mentioned to whom salutations are sent (16: 1-16). Some writers have attempted to prove that this portion is not an integral part of the letter, for it is claimed that the Apostle could not have known so many persons in a church he had never visited. But there is no variation in the manuscripts in this matter, for they all contain it. No doubt this last chapter was an addition, but the Apostle himself was in the habit of adding something more when he seemed to have come to an end. When he was in Corinth the former time, he lived with Prisca and Aquila, but now he was the guest of Gaius, and he sends salutations from him and others.

Questions

1. Why did Paul write this letter?
2. Who carried it to its destination?
3. How did Christianity first enter Rome?
4. Who was Paul's amanuensis in writing this Epistle?
5. What is the theme of this Epistle?

CHAPTER XVIII

THE EPISTLES OF THE FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT

THERE are four Epistles in this group: Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians. In each one of them you can hear the clank of the Apostle's chains (Col. 4: 2, 10; Philem. 1: 9; Eph. 3: 1; 4: 1; Phil. 1: 7, 13). An effort has been made to prove that these Epistles were written from an Ephesian imprisonment, but it has secured little following.¹ This group is separated by about five years from the former group, during which time the old controversy as to the means of salvation had passed away. On examination, it will be found that the outstanding feature of this group is its references to the Person of Jesus Christ, and for this reason it has been called the Christological Group (Col. 1: 15-17; Eph. 1: 20-23; Phil. 2: 5-11). Out of 149 times Jesus Christ is named, He is called Christ 65 times, Christ Jesus 25 times and the Lord 32 times. From this fact, these are called the Christological Epistles, the passages cited above being the most exalted of the New Testament concerning the Person of Jesus Christ.

Much has been written about the terms used by

¹ See G. S. Duncan, *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* (Scribner's).

the Apostle in this group, and the theory has been advanced that he drew some of his thoughts from Gnostic sources. But the use of words does not by any means imply that he used them in the philosophic sense of the time. Even our Lord Himself had to lift words out of their old current meanings to a higher level. So Paul had to use old words and divorce them from their old significance. The Apostle was now in Rome, where he was in a sense in touch with the empire. New thoughts and conceptions have come to him in the recent years in which he had been a prisoner in the hands of the representatives of the Roman Empire. He had planned to go to Rome, but it was as a freeman. However, while he had his plans, God had others for him. He was now in Rome after two years of imprisonment in Cæsarea. And he was touching circles that he never could have reached, had he been free. He was bound day and night to a member of the Prætorian Guard, which was peculiarly the Emperor's body of soldiers. The guard was changed at least three times a day, so one can easily see that the prisoner of Jesus Christ had an opportunity to preach Christ to men whom otherwise he would not have met. These soldiers were in a sense "of Cæsar's household," and in one of his letters he sends salutations from those whom he had won to Jesus Christ (Phil. 4: 22).

Paul occupied a peculiar position in that he was from one of the Roman provinces and a Roman citizen. This fact separated him from ordinary

prisoners, and in a sense gave him some prestige. He writes "my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard" (Phil. 1: 13). A significant record is made in the last two verses of Acts: "And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him" (28: 30-31). Thus, though a prisoner and closely confined, the Apostle was in constant touch with many churches by means of the workers who came to seek his advice, or went forth on his errands. Though he was bound the word of God was not, and he was able to accomplish great things for Christ.

Questions

1. How did Paul's position enable him to reach the churches?
2. What is the outstanding characteristic of the Epistles of this group?
3. How had the things which had happened to Paul "fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel"?
4. Wherein was Paul's Roman citizenship an aid to him and his work?
5. Why was Rome a strategic place to be occupied?

CHAPTER XIX

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

COLOSSÆ was situated in the Lycus valley, and was a city of the province of Phrygia. It was outranked in size and importance by the closely neighbouring cities of Hierapolis and Laodicea. Its exact site is now largely a matter of conjecture, for the valley is subject to earthquakes and the calcareous deposits of the Lycus river have obliterated it. The church at this place was not directly established by Paul for he had not been there or at Laodicea (Col. 2: 1), but by Epaphras one of Paul's converts (1: 7). During the three years the Apostle spent in Ephesus, he does not seem to have done any itinerating in that region. All roads in that country led to Ephesus and the Apostle's influence went far beyond its bounds. Demetrius the silversmith said of him, "that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia (*i. e.*, the province of Asia which covered the western end of Asia Minor), this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they are no gods that are made with hands." Epaphras did not confine his labours to his own city, but included also Laodicea and Hierapolis (Col. 4: 12-13).

The Colossian Church was mainly Gentile, though there was a Jewish element in it, and the

heretical ideas which had arisen were largely of Jewish origin. "The most probable view seems to be that some Alexandrian Jews had appeared at Colossæ, professing a belief in Christianity, and imbued with the Greek philosophy of Philo, but combining with it the Rabbinical theosophy and angelology which afterwards was embodied in the Kabbala, and an extravagant asceticism which afterwards distinguished several sects of the Gnostics."

The Apostle had received news about the Colossian Christians through Epaphras, who evidently had made a trip to Rome to see him and report the condition of affairs among them (1: 4). While the "faithful minister of Christ" had reported the favourable news, he had also informed Paul of insidious heresy which was threatening the existence of the church. It was to combat this situation that Paul wrote this letter. There was no assault on the Apostle's authority by the disturbers of the church, though they were undoubtedly of Jewish origin. The main design of the Epistle was to refute the heresies that were being taught, and to warn the Colossian Christians against them. The supreme glory of Christ is the principal theme of this Christological Epistle.

After an introductory part which includes his salutation, thanksgiving and prayer (1: 1-12), he proceeds to the doctrinal portion on the Person and Work of Christ (1: 13-2: 3). Then follow his warnings (2: 4-23). The balance of the Epistle consists of exhortations and injunctions (3: 1-

4: 6), and personal messages (4: 7-18). The bearer of the letter to its destination was Tychicus, who was accompanied by Onesimus, who was carrying the letter to Philemon.

This Epistle was written at the same time as the one to the Ephesians (Col. 4: 7-9; Eph. 6: 21-22). The date to be assigned them is probably 62 A. D. It should be said that some writers believe that they were written while the Apostle was a prisoner at Cæsarea, but he did not have as great freedom there as during his imprisonment at Rome, where, though bound to a Roman soldier, he lived in his own hired house (cf. Acts 24: 23; 28: 30-31).

It is noteworthy that the Apostle uses a large number of words which had not as yet appeared in his previous letters, but this is due to the specific purpose of the letter, dealing with ideas that had not been presented before. Furthermore, it is well to bear in mind the fact that its outstanding portions deal with different subjects than he had written about before this time.

Questions

1. What were the peculiar ideas treated by the Apostle in this letter?
2. Describe the far-reaching effects of Paul's work in Ephesus.
3. Note carefully the twelve persons named in this letter.
4. What specifically Pauline characteristics appear in this letter?
5. Note the autographic ending of this Epistle.

CHAPTER XX

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

IN a real sense, this short letter to Philemon may be called the gem of the Pauline Epistles. It is the only strictly personal letter that Paul wrote, those to Timothy and Titus dealing also with other matters than such as were merely personal. There have been attacks upon this Epistle, but we may dismiss them with the verdict of Reuss, who writes, "The fact that criticism has presumed to call in question the genuineness of these harmless lines only shows that itself is not the genuine thing."

Philemon was a Colossian and evidently a man of means, for the Apostle speaks of "the Church in thy house" (2). He was one of the fruits of Paul's ministry at Ephesus (19), and is called "our beloved fellow-worker." Apphia doubtless was his wife and Archippus their son, who is called "our fellow-soldier." It was he to whom the message of Colossians 4: 17 was addressed, where he is enjoined to "take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." This injunction implies some official relation of Archippus to the Colossian Church, something more important than the ordinary diaconate. Thus we have a model Christian family, all of whose members were engaged in Christian service

and whose commodious home was at the disposal of the Christians of Colossæ.

Onesimus, concerning whom the Apostle writes this letter, and who was its bearer, was a slave of Philemon and a Colossian (Col. 4: 9). He had run away, having robbed his master or caused him some financial loss (18), which the Apostle offers to make good. Somehow, the runaway slave had come in contact with Paul in Rome. No doubt Paul's name was a very dear one in the Colossian home and often repeated there. It may be that Onesimus, knowing that he was in Rome, sought him out. The result of that contact, however made, was that the slave of Philemon became a freeman in Christ. But he still was legally the slave of Philemon, and while the Apostle felt that he might be justified in retaining Onesimus with him, he did not do so. "Whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy goodness should not be of necessity, but of free will" (13-14).

The occasion of the letter was the sending of Onesimus back to his legal master that he might receive him "no longer as a servant (bondservant), but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord" (16). The young man had evidently endeared himself to the Apostle, who describes himself as "Paul, the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus" (9). It does not

seem, judging from the character of Philemon delineated in this letter, that this touching and earnest appeal could have failed of its purpose. It should be noted that the Apostle does not assail the institution of slavery, which was a part of Roman law and custom.

The date of this Epistle must be the same as that of Colossians, late in 62, or early in 63 A. D. It was carried to its destination by the one whom it concerned so much, even Onesimus. Salutations are sent in it from Epaphras, who at the time was a fellow-prisoner and from four of Paul's fellow-workers. Manifestly it was written by Paul's own hand.

Questions

1. Tell the story of Onesimus.
2. Read the Epistle over again and note its beauty and spirit.
3. Where would you rank this Epistle among the Pauline Epistles and why?
4. What view does it give you of an early Christian home?
5. Is not this Epistle a model in letter writing?

CHAPTER XXI

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

It should be noted at the outset that the two greatest manuscripts of the New Testament, known as the Vatican and the Sinaitic omit the words "at Ephesus" (1: 1). The space for these words was left vacant, evidently for the insertion of the name of other cities. This has led to the conclusion that the Epistle was designed for other destinations as well as Ephesus, that it was really a circular letter. The theory is that Tychicus bore several copies of it and that he was to leave them in other places, inserting the name of each. Thus the one left at Ephesus carried the words "at Ephesus." In Colossians 4: 16, we read, "When this Epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea." Now this Laodicean Epistle was none other than the copy of this Epistle, designed for that city and so inscribed. This Epistle then was intended for the group of churches of which Ephesus was the undoubted head, and quite naturally it came to be known by the name of the principal city to which it was sent. In keeping with this theory, it should be noted that there are no personal salutations from individuals included in it.

It is not necessary to repeat what has been said already with reference to the tremendous effect of the Apostle's three years' residence and work in the city of Ephesus. He did not go forth itinerating in the adjacent cities, for the influence of his work was felt "not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia" (Acts 19: 26). He specifically says, "I would have you know how greatly I strive for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh" (Col. 2: 1). He had just written to the Colossian Christians concerning the matters he had learned from Epaphras, the founder of that Church. Probably from the same person and through others, he heard about the general situation and progress of the various churches that had sprung up here and there in the vicinity of Ephesus. There was apparently a steady stream of people coming to his "hired house," where he was kept as a prisoner, from whom he would get the news of the churches which were in a sense his own. Tychicus was going to that region with the Epistle to the Colossians, so he embraces the opportunity to send this Epistle to Ephesus and its outlying circles of believers.

On studying this Epistle, it will be found that because of its encyclical character, it does not treat of specific matters. His purpose in it is rather to establish the truth than to combat error. He desired to strengthen the faith and encourage the hopes of the Christians of the general region contiguous to Ephesus.

After his salutation (1: 1-2), the Epistle is capable of division into three portions: I. The Doctrinal Part (1: 3-3: 21); II. The Practical (4: 1-6: 20); III. The conclusion (6: 21-24). Dr. Schaff has said that this Epistle is "the most spiritual and devout of Paul's Epistles," and that it was "composed in an exalted and transcendent state of mind, where theology runs into worship, and meditation into oration. It is the Epistle of the Heavens, an ode to Christ and His spotless bride, the Song of Songs of the New Testament."¹

It uses almost extravagant terms, as where he speaks of the riches of God's grace (1: 7), the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (1: 18), the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (2: 7), the unsearchable riches of Christ (3: 8), the riches of His glory (3: 16). Two prayers of the Apostle are a part of this inimitable letter (1: 15-19; 3: 14-21), and they are among the choicest portions of all his Epistles. Someone has said that Paul reaches the high-water mark in his recorded prayers. Other passages, especially noteworthy in this letter, are the contrast between the unregenerate and the regenerate (2: 1-22), and his description of the Christian's armour (6: 11-17).

As this Epistle and the one to the Colossians were written at the same time, they naturally have many points of close contact, but they are also distinct in their approach to the subject in

¹ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, p. 779 (Scribner's).

hand. It has been well said that Colossians is polemical and aims at the refutation of heresy; while Ephesians is dogmatic and serves to the establishment of truth.

The date of this Epistle is the same as that of Colossians, late in 62 A. D., or early in 63 A. D. Note the clanking of his Roman chains (4: 1; 6: 20). The bearer of the letter was Tychicus (6: 21-22).

Questions

1. Describe the Christian's armour in the words of the Apostle.
2. Read the letter over again and select your favourite passage in it.
3. Note the ascription to Christ Jesus in 1: 20-23.
4. Why are there no personal salutations in this Epistle?
5. How long was the Apostle's ministry in Ephesus and what were its results?

CHAPTER XXII

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

To none of his churches was the Apostle more closely bound than to the church at Philippi. Though he had not been able to spend much time there, so far as we know having been there only three times, there evidently had been many personal communications between them. The keynote of the Epistle is Joy and Rejoice. It is the constantly recurring note throughout. An attentive reader cannot fail to catch its spirit. Dr. Gloag writes: "The whole Epistle is a mixture of love and joy,—love for his converts, and joy at their spiritual welfare." But in spite of the fact that it is filled to the full with Pauline characteristics, there are some who have assailed its genuineness. These attacks may well be waved aside as "an instance of the insanity of hyper-criticism."

It was on the second missionary journey that Paul, Silas and Timothy came to Philippi, accompanied by Dr. Luke who joined them at Troas, doubtless to minister to the needs of Paul convalescing from his recent illness in Galatia. When the missionary band left Galatia, the Apostle thought of the province of Asia as his next field of labour, but the divine guidance led elsewhere. When they

were farther west he thought of Bithynia on the north, but again they were prevented (Acts 16: 6-10), and at last they came to Troas, wondering what the divine will might be. Just here the Apostle had the noted Macedonian vision in obedience to which they set sail from Troas for Europe over on the other side of the Ægean Sea.

Luke relates quite fully the story of the Philipian stay (Acts 16: 11-40). It was the first Apostolic work in Europe, and what a tale it is! There were so few Jews in that city that they did not have a synagogue, only a place for prayer outside of the city on the banks of the Gangites. But the indefatigable missionaries soon found it, and when they got there only a few women were gathered. Among them was one at least who responded with faith to the message given, and she was a Thyatiran, evidently a proselyte to the Jewish faith. Paul's words reached her inner nature, "whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul" (Acts 16: 14). She was a business woman, probably carrying on the business her husband had founded, and at her urgent invitation, her commodious home became their abode in Philippi. Thus the work began in that important city which had many historic memories, though today its ancient site is marked only by ruins. It was located on the Egnatian Highway, leading from the Adriatic up into Thrace and about eight miles from its seaport, Neapolis, on the Ægean Sea.

Luke's record tells also of the healing of the

crazy young Macedonian girl and the conversion of the Philippian jailor. Thus from the start the circle of believers was cosmopolitan. Ere long the work was interrupted by the well-known imprisonment of Paul and Silas and their brutal treatment. But the work was fruitful and evidently many were brought to the faith of Jesus. The Apostle was there possibly only twice afterwards. It is likely that it was at Philippi where Titus came to him with news from Corinth, Paul having left Ephesus just after Pentecost of 57 A. D. (1 Cor. 16: 8; 2 Cor. 7: 5). He was there again on the return of his Third Missionary Journey, spending Passover of 58 A. D. there, March 27 (Acts 20: 6).

Paul had evidence of the love of the Christians of Philippi soon after his departure, for during his stay at Thessalonica, their generosity was manifested at least twice (Phil. 4: 16). And when subsequently he was a prisoner in Rome and they had heard of his needs, they sent their offering by the hand of one of their own number, Epaphroditus. So zealous had their messenger been, that he had contracted sickness in Rome and was desperately ill (2: 25-30; 4: 10-18). News had gotten back to Philippi of his illness and had occasioned deep anxiety there for him. But he was convalescing and Paul was sending him home, and he was the bearer of this grateful love-letter.

The circumstances under which this Epistle was written as well as the feelings that prompted it would not permit any formal and logical arrangement of its material. His whole heart goes forth

in it to his beloved and generous friends who had given out of their deep poverty (2 Cor. 8: 1-50) not only for his needs, but as a part of the offering for the poor saints, which the Apostle was to bear to Jerusalem for relief work there. How grateful he was (4: 18-19). His object was to thank them and he uses the opportunity to attempt to reconcile differences that had arisen among some of them, as well as to warn them against error. Exhortations and personal matters constitute a large part of the letter. Particular attention is called to its classic Christological passage on the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus (2: 5-11).

Questions

1. Look up the thrilling history of Philippi.
2. Note the prominent part of women in the Church there.
3. What contacts did Paul have with this Church?
4. Does not this Epistle imply that some change had taken place in the Apostle's position in Rome leading him to hope for an early release?
5. Describe the earthquake which happened at Philippi during Paul's first visit there.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

THIS last group of the Pauline Epistles, which has been called the Pastoral Epistles, "because they are official letters addressed to Paul's fellow-labourers and contain instructions concerning the government of the Church and its office bearers," has had to run the gauntlet of fierce attacks on the part of many critics. It is separated from the former group by about five years and is characterized by instructions to Timothy and Titus concerning matters relating to the Church, and hence has been called the Ecclesiological Group. These letters, while containing much that was personally directed to these associates of the Apostle, also contain the directions mentioned above.

Many things have happened since the last group written from Rome, and as a consequence, we find many new terms used by Paul in them. The vivisectionists have used their scalpels upon them and have striven to prove that Paul could not have been their author in their present form at least. But as usual, they have failed to take into account the causes which have necessitated changes in vocabulary. A great deal has been made of the fact that they cannot be fitted into the history contained in the Acts. But if we are to be guided by

the unanimous verdict of the early Church, the Apostle was released from his first Roman imprisonment in 63 A. D., and subsequently spent a time of freedom in which he was able to carry out plans incidentally mentioned in the earlier Epistles.

When he wrote to Philemon, he said "prepare me also a lodging: for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted unto you" (22). So, in Philippians he expresses a similar hope (2: 23-24). Matters seemed to have reached a crisis in Rome, and as yet he did not know what would be the outcome, though he manifestly hoped for a release, which unquestionably did take place. We are dependent entirely on the intimations of this group for a clue to his movements. He doubtless would and did visit his beloved Philippian Church. From thence he would go over to the region of Ephesus. The visit to Crete implied in the letter to Titus would take place in this period (Tit. 1: 5), and also the sudden call which took him back to Macedonia when he left Timothy in charge at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1: 3; 3: 14). Paul had long thought of a visit to Spain (Rom. 15: 24, 28), and if we are to heed the opinion of the early Church, he must have accomplished it in this period.

Returning from the far west, the Apostle came to Ephesus again, probably in 66 A. D. Here he found that insidious heresies were making progress and had to be combated.¹ It was an anxious time for the great leader, and he was compelled to keep

¹ See my *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, p. 202ff. (Revell).

on the move. After the burning of Rome in 64 A. D., when Nero tried to lay the responsibility of that event on Christians, a Christian leader was in constant danger, and the Apostle doubtless realized the fact. His plans were subject to speedy changes. He had at one time thought to spend the winter of 67 A. D. at Nicopolis in Epirus (Tit. 3: 12), but evidently he hastened back to Troas where he left his cloak and parchments (2 Tim. 4: 13), while he went down to Ephesus where he was again arrested and taken to Rome, and from whence he wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy, and where by and by he gained the martyr's crown.

Questions

1. What changes had taken place in the last period of Paul's life?
2. Did the Apostle carry out his plan to go to Spain?
3. What is the outstanding feature of this group of Epistles?
4. Whom did he wish to have with him in those last momentous days?
5. How did he feel about his approaching death?

CHAPTER XXIV

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

TIMOTHY was apparently just a boy emerging into young manhood when the Apostle came on his first missionary journey to Lystra, where he performed a miracle which led to almost disastrous results to him. But Paul was only stunned by the murderous assault which was perpetrated upon him (Acts 14: 8-20). It is probable that that event led to the conversion of the boy who was to play a large part in the life and work of the Apostle. When Paul came to Lystra on his second journey, Timothy became associated with the missionary band (Acts 16: 1-3). The Apostle speaks of him in a most affectionate manner as "my beloved child." In his Epistle to the Philippians he writes "as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel" (2: 19-22). He is associated with the Apostle in his salutations to the Thessalonians, the Corinthians, the Colossians and the Philippians.

Timothy had a godly mother and also grandmother, by whom he was reared in the Jewish faith (2 Tim. 3: 15), thus laying a solid foundation for the faith in Jesus Christ, which subsequently distinguished him. His father was a Greek and ap-

parently died while he was a boy, and his training was due to the loving care of his devoted mother. Timothy had somewhat of a handicap in the matter of his health (1 Tim. 5: 23). But in spite of whatever disabilities he had, he became the trusted and beloved helper of Paul, being with him a large part of the time. To the Apostle, he was always a young man, for whom he was unusually solicitous. When Paul wrote, "Let no man despise thy youth," he had been with the Apostle for at least fifteen years, and was probably in his latter thirties. If he had not had peculiar qualifications for the position, Paul would not have placed him at the head of the Ephesian Church, elevating him above many who were older than he, at the time of the writing of this letter.

The Apostle had been suddenly called upon to go to Macedonia where he found that his return might be delayed longer than he had expected. It was this fact that led him to write this letter (1 Tim. 3: 14-15). His object in writing was to exhort him to counteract the developing heresies of the time, and to instruct him in the particulars of his duties as overseer in charge for the time being of the Ephesian Church. After his salutation (1: 1-2), he reminds Timothy of his exhortation about the false teachers (1: 3-20), gives directions with reference to matters pertaining to the life and order of the Church and the choice of the proper men for official positions in it and generally as to the nature and functions of the Church (2: 1-4: 11). The rest of the letter is given to special

exhortations with reference to various classes in the Church and with warnings against the dangerous elements to be dealt with (4: 12-6: 21).

This Epistle deals not so much with doctrinal matters, for they were not in the forefront, but with matters relating to the organization and government of the Church. There is a very personal side to the letter, but this is entirely incidental to the main purpose of it. How solemn the words of 6: 11-16! The date of composition was in 67 A. D.

Questions

1. Trace the history of the relation of Timothy to the Apostle.
2. Read the letter again and tell your impressions from it of Timothy.
3. How do you explain the presence in this letter of new terms and words?
4. Name Timothy's mother and grandmother.
5. Does he not illustrate the value of early religious training?

CHAPTER XXV

THE EPISTLE TO TITUS

TITUS, to whom Paul sent this letter, is not named in the Acts, but his name appears twelve times in the other Pauline Epistles, nine of them in 2 Corinthians, twice in Galatians, and once in the Second Epistle to Timothy. He was a Greek (Gal. 2: 3). When Paul and Barnabas were commissioned by the Antiochian Church to go to Jerusalem to confer with the Church there concerning the relation of the Gentiles to the Jewish law, Titus accompanied them (Gal. 2: 1). The Judaizers tried to compel him to be circumcised, but as that was the crucial point of their contention, Paul absolutely resisted it, and won the victory (Gal. 2: 3-5). Paul calls him "my true child after a common faith," showing that Titus was a convert of his own, and that without question before that memorable event in Jerusalem when Titus was such a central figure.

The next time Titus' name appears is in connection with the Corinthian Church. He took the First Epistle to the Corinthians to its destination, in the spring of 57 A. D. Paul left Ephesus sometime later, hoping to meet Titus at Troas with news concerning the reception of that letter, but when he reached that place Titus had not come (2 Cor.

2: 12-13). So great was the strain on him, that he crossed over to Macedonia that he might meet Titus sooner, and where presently he met the letter carrier (7: 5-16) with a full report of the effect of the Epistle. Immediately, the Apostle wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians and sent it off in the hands of Titus (8: 16-24). The messenger had another commission, and that was to complete the collection that was being taken up for the relief work at Jerusalem, which he had already begun beforehand (2 Cor. 8: 6), and which Paul subsequently took to Jerusalem (Rom. 15: 25-26).

From that time, summer, 57 A. D., Titus' name does not appear again until in this letter to him. The Apostle went with him to Crete, probably from Ephesus, in the summer of 67 A. D. Conditions had arisen there which demanded his attention, but as something compelled him to leave there before he could complete the delicate task, he left Titus to continue that work (1: 5). His stay on the island was to be only temporary, for Paul instructs him to join him as soon as possible at Nicopolis in Epirus where he was expecting to spend the following winter. He was to follow the Apostle just as soon as Artemas or Tychicus should come to Crete to take his place (3: 13). According to 2 Timothy 4: 12, Tychicus was the one who was actually sent, and probably in this case, as in that of Ephesians (6: 21), and Colossians (4: 7), he was the bearer of this letter. One other reference is made by Paul to Titus, where he tells Timothy that Titus had gone to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4: 9).

From this we see that Paul's "partner and fellow-worker" (2 Cor. 8: 23) was still true to form, running errands for his spiritual father.

Titus' mission both to Corinth as the bearer of the First Epistle to that Church, and as the director in the benevolence work pending, and to Crete, give evidence of the Apostle's confidence in his wisdom and zeal. Paul trusted him in delicate missions, and he manifestly was equal to the emergencies. A rare tribute is paid him by the Apostle in 2 Corinthians 7: 5-16.

It is difficult to understand clearly the situation Titus had to deal with among the Cretan Christians. It seems to have had a Judaistic origin mixed with some tendencies of Cretan character (1: 10-16) with a generally factious condition (3: 1-10). Indeed, it was a kind of hodgepodge of errors of belief and conduct, extremely difficult to correct. We may be sure that Titus carried out his instructions to the letter.

By this letter, its recipient was empowered to carry out the Apostle's instructions, and perform his responsibility. It was written somewhere on his way to Epirus where, at the time, he was expecting to spend the winter of 67 A. D. (3: 12). The Apostle wished to have Titus with him, so he writes "give diligence to come unto me to Nicopolis." That he did reach the Apostle is evident from 2 Timothy 4: 10, where he says that Titus had gone to Dalmatia after having been with him, doubtless having been sent there by the Apostle to perform some service for which experience had

shown he was fully qualified. The Apostle well knew whom he could trust for any errand, and Titus had already given evidence of his usefulness in such matters.

Questions

1. Reconstruct the history of Titus from Paul's references to him.
2. What would you say were the strong points in his character?
3. What part did he play in Paul's struggle with the Judaizers?
4. Have you noticed how Paul bound young men to himself?
5. What important duty was assigned to Titus at Corinth?

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

WE now come to the last of the Pauline Epistles. It has been called his Swan Song. Few have had the hardihood to question its genuineness. Indeed, one has said that, "the marks of Pauline origin are so strong that I do not think that any Epistle can, with more confidence, be asserted to be the Apostle's work." Another writes that, "of all the Pauline Epistles which criticism has attacked, none bears the stamp of genuineness so plainly as this."

The Apostle is again a prisoner (1: 8; 2: 3, 9). On the former occasion, though he was bound day and night to a Roman soldier, he was permitted to dwell in his own hired house (Acts 28: 30), where access to him was allowed. But now it is evident that he was in much closer confinement, for when Onesiphorus was in Rome, he had to search diligently before he found Paul (1: 16-18). He already had had at least a preliminary trial at which he had been successful, but he had been remanded to prison to await his final trial. Since the burning of the city of Rome by Nero, when that crime was charged against Christians by the Emperor, the very fact that one was a Christian was a capital offense. Formerly it had not been so and friends came to him and went as they

pleased. But now it was different. He was practically alone with only Luke at hand (4: 11). Others had deserted him, while still others were absent on various missions (4: 10-12, 16).

Paul has the feeling that the end could not be far away. "The time of my departure is come" (4: 6). He feels that his work is about over. He is lonely and his cry to Timothy is, "Give diligence to come shortly unto me." Then he thinks of the young man who had regained his confidence and adds, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering." When he was last at Troas, he had left his cloak there, and he is feeling the need of it in the prison where he is incarcerated. But even more than that, he wants "the books, especially the parchments." Just what these were we can only conjecture, but probably they were portions of the Scriptures written on vellum, the customary material for such. Was it not Sir Walter Scott who, on his death bed, asked for "the book," and when asked what book replied, "The only book, the Bible."

He was not afraid in any sense, but was sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust. "I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day." Now old in years, and worn out by many trials, deserted in a great measure by his friends, he waits with calmness and with a certain degree of satisfaction his approaching martyrdom. But still, he longs for the com-

panionship of Timothy and Mark. Faithful Dr. Luke is by his side, but he wants the others also. How intensely human he was!

This Epistle is really a private letter and not as much of an official communication as the First, and as such it partakes of the freedom of such in its arrangement and does not admit of formal divisions. It is the outgoing of a great heart to one who was bound to him by many ties in Christ Jesus. Dr. Gloag says that it "is a pastoral charge, primarily designed for Timothy, but applicable to all ministers and to all congregations in the Christian Church."

It was written from Rome as the winter of 67 A. D. was approaching. It is almost valedictory in its character. We can only hope that Timothy and Mark reached him in due time, and were able to minister to him, even though in doing so they were themselves placed in a perilous position. Some time in the early part of 68, before the death of Nero, if tradition is correct, the aged Apostle was granted the privilege of the death of a Roman citizen and was beheaded somewhere out on the Ostian Road, not far from Rome. Thus he departed and was with the Lord, which according to his opinion was "very far better" (Phil. 1: 23).

Nowhere does the Apostle's noble manhood stand out more clearly than in this last message, written in the face of impending martyrdom. With true Christian gladiatorial spirit he practically says here, "We who are about to die, salute thee."

Questions

1. Read this Epistle over again carefully and note its beauty.
2. With what feeling does the Apostle face the end of his life?
3. How long had Timothy been associated with the Apostle?
4. What impression of Paul have you gotten from the study of his thirteen Epistles?
5. What confidence in Jesus Christ did Paul express in this Epistle 1: 12?

CHAPTER XXVII

THE ANONYMOUS EPISTLE: HEBREWS

ORIGEN, a famous Christian writer of the third century, said, "Who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, God only certainly knows." His verdict in this matter still stands, though several persons have been suggested as the possible author without, however, commanding much approval. The Epistle itself makes no claim as to its author. The early Eastern Church believed that Paul wrote it, but the Western did not. And because of this fact, the Western Church for a considerable time did not acknowledge its canonical authority. However, the whole Church eventually accepted it as of such authority without any affirmations as to the mooted point. It is interesting to note in this connection, that the three greatest Manuscripts of the New Testament, the Vatican, the Alexandrian and the Sinaitic, place the book immediately after the Thessalonian and before the Pastoral Epistles, thus showing that they regarded it as Pauline. Its position in our English Versions, after the acknowledged Pauline Epistles, is in harmony with the uncertainty concerning its author.

It is impossible to enter into this question here,

as space forbids, and after all that might be said since the Epistle makes no claim itself in this matter, we can afford to let Origen's verdict stand. However, it should be said in this connection that the Epistle shows the influence of Pauline thought upon its author, though it has other features which do not harmonize with Pauline authorship.

This Epistle is not only anonymous, but also lacks any address. That was early supplied and it is known as the Epistle to Hebrews without any indication as to what Hebrews. Note that it is not a general Epistle to *the* Hebrews. There is quite general agreement among scholars that the author had in mind Palestinian Jews, for "The whole tenor of the Epistle implies that the persons to whom it was written, lived under the shadow of the Temple services." The writer goes back to the Tabernacle and nowhere is the Temple, which succeeded the Tabernacle, mentioned. It is as though he would go "back to the first institution of the ritual of the law." This is especially noticeable in chapters 8 to 10. The salutation, to "them that have the rule over you," implies some particular section of Hebrews. That they were Christian Hebrews almost goes without saying, for they were in danger of lapsing from their Christian faith. They had suffered persecutions and in the struggle against sin, some of them at least had "not resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (12: 4). They were in danger both without and within, and the author challenges them to "fear, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into

his rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it" (4: 1).

Bishop Westcott says that, "the theme of the Epistle is 'The Transcendence and Finality of God's Revelation in Christ Jesus His Son.'" There are four specific Warnings to be found in the Epistle: 2: 1-4; 3: 7-4: 13; 5: 11-6: 20; 10: 19-39. Each of these warnings grows out of the preceding section, and they constitute a very important element in it.¹

The Epistle contains many passages of special note, among which should be noted the eleventh chapter with its account of the achievements of faith on the part of great men and women of the Old Testament. It has been called, "The Westminster Abbey of Faith's Worthies of the Old Testament." The object of the Epistle was to strengthen and comfort its readers in their persecutions and at the same time to warn them against the danger of apostasy to Judaism.

Professor Moorehead has keenly written: "Hebrews shows that Judaism was the shadow, Christianity the substance; Judaism the husk, Christianity the kernel within; Judaism the body, Christianity the spirit; Judaism the type, Christianity the antitype; and as substance is always better than the shadow, the reality than the picture, the kernel wrapped up in the husk than the husk itself, the spirit than the body, the antitype than the type, so is Christianity better than Juda-

¹ For a complete outline of the contents, see my *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, p. 242ff. (Revell).

ism. The word 'better' is the key word of Hebrews." ²

As to the date it can be said without fear of successful contradiction, that it was written before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A. D., and probably before that event was even foreshadowed in the movements of the Romans against the holy city.

Questions

1. Pick out what you regard as the greatest part of this great Epistle?
2. What information does this Epistle give about Melchizedek?
3. What does it tell us about Jesus' temptations?
4. What does it teach concerning the Person of Jesus Christ?
5. Read carefully the eleventh chapter and tell of some of the achievements of faith.

² Wm. G. Moorehead, *Outline Studies on Hebrews* (Revell).

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES

WE come now to the third Group of Epistles, which are generally known as the Catholic Epistles, sometimes as the General Epistles. These Epistles, with the exception of Second and Third John, which are included among them, are addressed to a wider constituency than those which have been studied. The term Catholic was first employed to denote those Epistles not addressed to any particular individual or Church, but to the Church in general, or at least to a wide circle of readers. There is a sense in which Ephesians might be called a Catholic Epistle, for it evidently was designed for a considerable group of Churches, of which that at Ephesus was one; but it is a Pauline Epistle and has already been studied among the Pauline Epistles where it therefore belongs naturally. So the Epistle to Hebrews might also be included, but since it is anonymous, it was treated by itself.

Seven Epistles are included in this group: James, First and Second Peter, First, Second and Third John and Jude. They will be individually considered in the order in which we find them in *The New Testament As It Stands*. Time and space do not permit entering into a detailed ac-

count of the history until they were universally acknowledged as part of the sacred Canon. Suffice it to say that there were times when one, or more, of them were omitted from the recognized Canon of certain sections of the Church. But eventually, they gained such recognition. Dr. Gloag sums this matter thus: "Subsequently to the time of Eusebius, the whole seven Epistles were admitted into the Canon, and are mentioned in the various ecclesiastical catalogues, which were promulgated by the Councils of the Church, or given in the works of the celebrated Fathers."¹

Questions

1. Name the Epistles belonging to this group.
2. Why are they called Catholic or General?
3. What other Epistles than these might be called Catholic?
4. Note that these Epistles are not called "The Roman Catholic Epistles."
5. Which one of this group is to you the most important and why?

¹ Paton J. Gloag, *Introduction to Catholic Epistles*, p. 15 (T. & T. Clark).

CHAPTER XXIX

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

THE author of this Epistle designates himself as "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1: 1). Immediately the question confronts us as to which James of the New Testament history he is. There are five persons in the gospel history bearing this name. There was: 1. James the son of Zebedee (Matt. 10: 2); 2. James the son of Alphæus (Matt. 10: 3); 3. James the Lord's brother (Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3; Gal. 1: 19); 4. James the less (Mark 15: 40); and 5. James the father of Judas (Luke 6: 16). Of these last two, we know absolutely nothing. James the son of Zebedee and brother of John was beheaded by Herod Agrippa I in 44 A. D. That leaves but two (2 and 3), and of these two, we know nothing about James the son of Alphæus, except that he was one of the twelve Apostles. There remains only James the Lord's brother, the oldest of His four brothers (Matt. 13: 55). This James is named in several places (Acts 12: 17; 15: 13; 21: 18; Gal. 1: 19; 2: 9, 12; 1 Cor. 15: 7). Jude in his Epistle names himself as "brother of James," doubtless meaning this prominent James. John tells us in his Gospel that

Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him at one time (7: 5).

After the resurrection of Jesus, we find Mary and His brethren listed among those who were gathered in the upper chamber (Acts 1: 14), showing that the unbelief of those brothers had been changed into belief and discipleship. Paul specifically mentions an appearance of the risen Lord to James (1 Cor. 15: 7). Evidently it was because of his personal character and also the fact that he was Jesus' oldest brother that he early became so prominent in the Church at Jerusalem (Acts 12: 17; 15: 13; 21: 18; Gal. 2: 9). It was to this James that Paul reported when he came to Jerusalem with the offering of the Macedonian and Achæan Churches, and also gave the account of his missionary labours and successes. James was the presiding officer at the Council of Jerusalem where Paul gained his great victory in behalf of the freedom of the Gentiles from Mosaic requirements. He was one of the three pillars who gave Paul the right hand of fellowship at that memorable conference.

James was called James the Just by his countrymen and was highly regarded by them for his personal character. It is said by tradition that he spent so much time on his knees in prayer in the Temple, that they became as callous as a camel's hoofs. But in spite of the high esteem in which he was held, he became a victim of the rage of his countrymen. The Jews of the city, Eusebius informs us, became so enraged by the escape

of Paul from their fury by being transferred by the chief captain to safe keeping at Cæsarea (Acts 21: 27-23: 30), that they seized James and beat him to death. It is Josephus who tells us that this took place after the death of Festus and before his successor came to Judæa in 62 A. D.

This Epistle is addressed "to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion" (1: 1). The Jews had become widely dispersed through the nations, many of them having been deported while others had gone of their own free will. On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 9-11), Jews were present in Jerusalem from some fifteen different nations. The term "Dispersion" had come to be the designation of the Jews dwelling outside of Palestine, whether they had been compelled to leave that region or not. But those addressed in this Epistle were Christian Jews, for James calls them "brethren," "beloved brethren," some twelve times, and specifically speaks of them as those who "hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory" (2: 1). They accordingly were Jewish Christians dwelling outside of Palestine.

There are more references to nature in this Epistle than in all of the Pauline Epistles. In this respect, James is very like Jesus, Whose parables and illustrations are so often drawn from nature. Indeed, this short letter is fairly saturated with the language of Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount. As illustrations of the use of nature by James, note 1: 6; 10: 11; 3: 4, 5, 7, 12; 4: 14; 5: 2, 3, 7, 18. The manifest object of James was

ethical. "Although there may be a comparative want of Christian dogma, there is no want of Christian ethics, for there is no writing of the New Testament which is more deeply pervaded with the moral teaching of Christ."

As to the date, it may be said that it must have been written before the Council of Jerusalem in 51 A. D., for after that event it is practically certain that the author would have avoided his seeming conflict with Paul's teachings with reference to the deeds of the law. Probably it is the earliest of the entire New Testament. A formal outline of its contents is impossible for it does not follow any logical plan. Its author must have had wide acquaintance with the conditions prevailing among the Christian Jews of the Dispersion, and it was to meet their needs of advice and warning that he wrote.

Questions

1. Who are the five men named James in the New Testament?
2. Give a sketch of the life of the author of this Epistle.
3. What was the attitude of Jesus' brothers toward Him during His ministry?
4. On what basis did James become so prominent in the Jerusalem Church?
5. Examine this Epistle again for its references to nature.

CHAPTER XXX

FIRST PETER

THIS Epistle distinctly claims to be by "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1: 1). The early Church unanimously and unhesitatingly accepted it as such. The attacks which have been made upon it come as a rule from those who have some theory to uphold. We may ignore them utterly. Even Renan says, "The First Epistle of Peter is one of the writings of the New Testament which are most anciently and unanimously cited as authentic." We may let the matter stand as one of the surest facts of the entire New Testament.

Peter's original name was Simon. At His first contact with him, Jesus said, "Thou art Simon, the son of John; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)" (John 1: 42). At the time of Peter's second confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Master responded, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah" (Matt. 16: 17). He was a resident of Bethsaida (John 1: 44). Subsequently, his home was in Capernaum (Mark 1: 21, 29). He and his brother Andrew were partners as fishermen with Zebedee and his sons, John and James (Luke 5: 1-11). Peter's first contact with Jesus was

brought about by his brother Andrew, who with John had had their attention drawn to the Master by John the Baptist (John 1: 35-42). Immediately those two men sought their respective brothers to tell them about Jesus. Andrew found his brother Peter first. From that time Peter was a disciple of Jesus, and eventually became one of the twelve apostles, his name leading in every list.

Peter's personal qualities marked him out as a leader of those with whom he might be associated. Space here will not permit us to follow his history as a disciple, but he was one of the favoured three, and was in close touch with the Master throughout His entire ministry, and in the apostolic history, was one of the three pillars (Gal. 2: 6-9). The darkest moment in his life was when he denied the Master, but his repentance was genuine and his forgiveness complete (John 18: 15 ff.; 21: 15). To Peter was given the honour of a special appearance of Jesus after His resurrection (Luke 24: 34; 1 Cor. 15: 5). His also was the high honour of being the herald of the Resurrection of Jesus on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 14-43).

Tradition busies itself more with the name of Peter than that of any of the other Apostles, but we can only note that fact here. He was in Jerusalem when Paul first came there as a Christian, three years after his conversion (Gal. 1: 18), which probably took place about 34 A. D. He was the first spokesman at the Council of Jerusalem in 50 A. D. (Acts 15: 7-11). James called him

at that time "Symeon" (15: 14). If Peter had been in Rome when Paul was a prisoner there, and when he wrote his prison Epistles, he almost certainly would have referred to him in some way, and as he does not do so, we assume Peter was not there in 61-63 A. D. When Peter wrote this First Epistle in 64 A. D., he was at Babylon on the Euphrates. These facts entirely negate the Roman Catholic claim that he was bishop at Rome for twenty-five years continuously.

This Epistle is addressed "to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." These provinces are mentioned in the order in which one would come to them from Babylon, and this fact incidentally supports the position taken here that it was written from there and not from Rome, as some have claimed, assuming that by "Babylon" Rome is really meant (Rev. 14: 8; 16: 19, etc.). When Paul wrote his Epistle to the Colossians, Mark was planning a trip to that region (Col. 4: 10). When Peter wrote this Epistle, Mark was with him, showing that Mark had gone on to that point from Colossæ. As Peter shows a manifest dependence in this letter upon Ephesians, it may be assumed that Mark brought with him a copy of that encyclical letter, that Peter had read it, as also the Epistle to the Romans, which Mark may also have brought with him. Anyhow, Peter's letter shows very clearly the influence of those two great letters of Paul.

As was seen in the study of James, the term

“Dispersion” had acquired a special significance, as meaning the Jews scattered outside of Palestine. But Peter speaks of the “elect sojourners” meaning the Christians in the regions indicated by his address. That they were Gentiles is evident from 4: 3. It is quite probable that Mark had passed through the provinces indicated on his way to Babylon, and had brought to Peter recent news concerning the churches he had thus come into contact with on the way. These churches had all been founded, either directly or indirectly, by Paul and were thus what might be called Pauline churches. The news received concerning them led Peter to write to them. Dr. Warfield said that the secondary object of this Epistle was “Peter’s publication of his agreement with the Apostle Paul, and his reply to the misrepresentations of the Judaizers, who were using his name to undermine the faith of the Christians of that region.”¹

This Epistle has no formal divisions. It begins with a salutation (1: 1–2) and thanksgiving (1: 3–12). The main portion (1: 13–5: 9) consists of various exhortations, followed by a benediction (5: 10–11). His amanuensis, according to 5:12, was Silas (Silvanus), and he probably carried the letter to its destination. Peter’s object in writing was “exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace: stand ye fast therein.” Salutations from the Church of Babylon and Mark, together with another benediction, bring the letter to a close.

¹ B. B. Warfield, *Syllabus of Introduction to Catholic Epistles*, p. 92.

It should be noted that there would be a peculiar fitness in sending this Epistle to its destination by the hand of Silvanus, for he had been associated with Paul in his earlier work at Corinth and Thessalonica. He was thus an ideal person to carry a Petrine letter to the churches which owed their existence either directly or indirectly to Paul. Indeed he was a kind of connecting link between the two great Apostles who in their latter years had become more closely connected in their service of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions

1. Why should Peter write to Pauline churches?
2. Where have we met Mark and Silas before this letter?
3. Where was Peter when he wrote?
4. Give a sketch of Peter's life.
5. What evidence have we that Peter was an impulsive man?

CHAPTER XXXI

SECOND PETER

THE dissecting-room critics have fairly gloated over this Epistle, as it seems to furnish them with a splendid subject for their operations. Comparing it with the First Epistle, they find minute linguistic differences which they solemnly affirm show that they could not have proceeded from the same author. But while they are so sure of having proven their contention, others, and there are many of them, agree with Reuss in his affirmation, "We lay no stress on the linguistic differences between the two Epistles, which modern criticism has emphasized too much. The two Epistles are too short, have to do with wholly different circumstances, and there are no direct contradictions to be found. Only when spuriousness has been proven on other grounds, may this point be taken into account." Meanwhile, we may let the dissectors find their pleasure in their operations, but we will take the book as it stands in the New Testament.

The Epistle opens with a definite claim to Petrine authorship. "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ" (1: 1), and furthermore, we read in it, "This is now, beloved, the second epistle that

I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind" (3: 1). Nothing could be more definite and positive than these words, linking it with the First Epistle. In this connection, it should be noted that this Epistle was practically accepted as Peter's in all parts of the early Church.¹

This Epistle is addressed "to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ." That very general address is subsequently limited by the reference to the First Epistle, showing that its author had in mind the same persons as were addressed in that letter (3: 1). Only extreme incredulity can lead anyone to refuse to accept this specific word of the author.

The reference in this Epistle to the Pauline Epistles is a matter worthy of special note. Peter writes, "Our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures." Those words imply that not only already were Epistles of Paul collected together, but also that they were recognized as "scriptures," placing them on an equality with the Scriptures of the Old Testament in point of authority. Of course, the critics are offended at this classification of the Pauline Epistles as scripture, saying that this marks the late date of this

¹ See my *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, p. 277ff.

Epistle and could not have been done at the traditional time of its writing. But let us be guided by Peter in this matter, rather than the theory of the critics.

A pertinent question here is as to whom Peter wrote this second letter. The answer to this is found in 3: 1-4, 17-18. He had evidently received recent news from the region addressed in 1 Peter 1: 1, showing that a new form of heresy had developed. His object was twofold: first, to warn them against the false teachers, and second, to exhort his readers to be progressive in holiness, to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." He wrote to "stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance; that ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles." The keynote of the Epistle is "Knowledge," and the whole is polemical. It does not have any formal outline, consisting of exhortations and warnings and reminders following one another without any specially logical connection.

The date of this Epistle could not have been very near that of the First which has already been dated about 64 A. D. Its manifest dependence on Jude (2: 1-3: 3; Jude 4-18), necessitates a date subsequent to that Epistle, which may possibly have been as late as 66 A. D. It must also have been later than Ephesians (62 A. D.), use of which it makes. As we have seen, First Peter was written at Babylon. There are no clues to the place of

the composition of this second letter, and for lack of better information, it probably was written somewhere between Babylon and Rome, where Peter's life was crowned with a violent death, as had been intimated by our Lord (John 21: 18-19; 2 Pet. 1: 13-14), when he had "entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (1: 11).

Questions

1. Do you think that any other than an actual witness of the Transfiguration could have written 1: 16-18?
2. What evidence is there that this Epistle was written to the same people as the First?
3. Why did Peter write to Pauline Churches?
4. What did our Lord tell Peter about his future?
5. What opinion have you formed of Peter from his letters?

CHAPTER XXXII

FIRST JOHN

No name is attached to this Epistle, but from the earliest days it has been attributed to the Apostle John. Polycarp and Papias were disciples of the Apostle, and Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp. These three make use of the Epistle, and ascribe it to John. Comparison of this letter with the Gospel according to John demonstrates identity of authorship. The language and style are identical; and the personality lying back of the two books is the same. Though both are anonymous, they bear witness to identity of authorship. Of course, modern destructive criticism true to form has tried, but in vain, to find another author for the two books. We may confidently vote with the early Church in its ascription of the two books to John the beloved disciple.

There is no direct intimation as to whom this Epistle was written, but it manifestly is a companion piece to the Gospel according to John. Dr. Warfield has said that, "the Gospel is written from the point of view of the historian; the Epistle from that of the preacher against the errors of his flock. The differences amount only to the natural differences between the historian and the preacher:

the recorder of facts of teaching and the applier of the teaching to present needs."

The author states his object in writing, "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (5: 13). Place beside these words his expressed purpose in writing the Gospel, "These are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye may have life in his name" (20: 31). These two verses absolutely bind the two books together and show related objects. In his Gospel, John gives the facts about Jesus Christ, and in this Epistle he applies those facts to the hearts and lives of those for whom he had first written his Gospel.

Wherever the Gospel was written, this letter also was written, and that was probably Ephesus where John spent so much of his life. That region was a perfect hotbed of heretical ideas, especially of Gnostic origin, and the need for counteracting them had become apparent to the aged Apostle. While for lack of full information as to the progress of these subtle and peculiar ideas no one can say just when they developed, yet we know enough to feel positive that Ephesus must have been the place of composition of this letter that sought to counteract them. The old controversies in which Paul had been engaged with the Judaizers were a thing of the past. Some of the heresies he had been compelled to meet had developed far beyond what he deals with in his Epistle to the Colossians. A

number of years had elapsed, and John had to meet new forms of error. Ephesus would be a center for them.

The Epistle is somewhat difficult to outline. After the introductory words of 1: 1-4, the main body of the letter is found in 1: 5-5: 12. In this section, with tremendous earnestness, he addresses them as "my little children," "brethren," "beloved," striving to win them from the insidious errors of belief and conduct that were rife. The keynote of the Epistle is Love, but while dwelling on this "greatest thing in the world," he does not fail to use the sternest language in his denunciations of all that is not in keeping with it. The conclusion extends from 5: 13-21.

Questions

1. What was the specific object of this Epistle?
2. How does the Apostle meet the errors that were rife at the time?
3. Is there anything in the Epistle that is in conflict with Johannean authorship?
4. What are the points of contact between this Epistle and John's Gospel?
5. Where did John spend the latter years of his life?

CHAPTER XXXIII

SECOND AND THIRD JOHN

THESE two Epistles are so closely associated that they will be considered together here. Their author is "The elder" (2 John 1; 3 John 1). Who can "The elder" be? Some have tried to create a presbyter John, who was a different person from the Apostle John, but they have failed to secure much of a following. The brevity of these Epistles accounts for the fact that we have no early quotations from them, but in spite of all uncertainty about their authorship, they won their way into the Canon, and are found in all of the second century versions. They are so similar in language and style that they stand or fall together. With reference to the Second Epistle, it may be said that seven or eight of its thirteen verses are to be found in the First Epistle, while the Third Epistle repeats phrases of the Second. All three are Johannean in every respect.

Second John is addressed to "the elect lady and her children." Two ideas are held about this address. Some think it is a particular church, while others hold that the word translated "lady" is really a personal name, that it is addressed to Kyria, a Christian lady and her children. This is

the most literal interpretation, and commands the assent of many. Accordingly, this letter is written to a mother who has a family, some of whom are grown up and are Christians. She probably lived not far from Ephesus.

Third John is addressed to "Gaius the beloved." There are three of this name in the New Testament, namely, a Macedonian (Acts 19: 29), a wealthy Corinthian, whom Paul had baptized and who was Paul's host in that city (Rom. 16: 23; 1 Cor. 1: 14), Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20: 4). It is impossible to identify the Gaius of this Epistle with any one of these. This Gaius was dear to the Apostle, who commends his Christian hospitality. Evidently he was one of John's own converts (4). Two others are named in this letter, Diotrephes and Demetrius. Of these, Demetrius was a devoted Christian who was held in high regard by all who knew him, including the Apostle himself (12). But there is a different story to be told about Diotrephes, who in spite of the fact that he was an officer of the Church, was bold, unscrupulous and ambitious. He had spoken against the Apostle and had rejected his messengers, possibly those who had brought the Apostle's Gospel and First Epistle to the Church of that place. Evidently, he was heretical in his beliefs (9-11).

The Second Epistle was written to warn Kyria and her family of the danger to which they were exposed and to entreat them to be steadfast and watchful. It also enjoins them not to receive the disseminators of heresy into their home, nor even

to greet them. The Third Epistle was occasioned by the course pursued by Diotrephes, who had been using his authority in the Church to resist the truth and protect heresy. Gaius is himself commended for his hospitality and Demetrius also is commended. For Diotrephes, John has nothing but condemnation for his conduct. How often a Diotrephes has been the cause of trouble even in these modern times, when he has used his position to gain some personal end.

In both Epistles, the author says that he has many things that he might write about, but in each case he was expecting to visit the persons addressed shortly, and would then speak of the matters he had in mind. It is out of a full heart that the Elder writes to his beloved friends. In more than an official sense was the aged writer "the elder."

Questions

1. Give the substance of each of these letters.
2. Is there a Diotrephes in the church of which you are a member?
3. What dangers were confronting the persons addressed in these letters?
4. What does "walking in truth" mean?
5. Is not John still a Boanerges in these last writings of his? (Mark 3: 17).

CHAPTER XXXIV

JUDE

THIS seventh of the Catholic Epistles claims to be by "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." He distinguishes himself from the Apostles for he enjoins his readers, "But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (17). Jude is really the English form of Judas. In all, there are seven who bear the name of Judas in the New Testament. In this Epistle, the author distinguishes himself from others of the same name by calling himself the brother of James. In the two lists of the brothers of Jesus, he is given the Greek form Judas (Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3). Who could this James be, whose brother he is, but the James of Jerusalem, whose Epistle we have already studied (p. 131)? If that is the case, then this Jude (Judas) was none other than one of Jesus' brothers, though he is content to speak of himself as James' brother. He has already called himself "a servant of Jesus Christ!"

Of this Jude we know very little aside from this Epistle, which really gives but little information about its author. Jesus' brethren, who had been unbelievers in regard to Him (John 7: 5), were with their mother in the upper chamber after the

Resurrection of Jesus (Acts 1: 14), showing that they had been converted by that great event. Paul's reference to them shows that they were married men (1 Cor. 9: 5). Traditions concerning Jude are conflicting and uncertain.

This Epistle is addressed "to them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ." That is truly a general address, but a close scrutiny of the Epistle shows that the author had in mind especially those who were acquainted with Jewish history. It is probable that Jude had in mind particularly the Jewish Christians of Palestine.

The design of the author is plainly stated. "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (3). And furthermore, he gives his reason for writing. "For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (4). His purpose accordingly was not only to instruct and confirm, but also to urge them to stand for their historic faith against those who were striving to corrupt it.

Dean Alford calls it, "an impassioned invective, in the impetuous whirlwind of which the writer is hurried along, collecting example after example of divine vengeance on the ungodly; heaping epithet

upon epithet, and piling image upon image, and as it were labouring for words and images strong enough to depict the polluted character of the licentious apostates against whom he is warning the Church.”¹

The date of this Epistle must have been before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., for otherwise it would have furnished Jude with a most appalling example of divine judgment. Since Peter in his Second Epistle was dependent upon this Epistle, it must have been written before that letter, and probably about 64–66 A. D.

No formal outline can be given of its contents. Particular attention is called to its doxological conclusion, which is the most exalted in the entire New Testament.

Questions

1. How many of the name of Judas are mentioned in the New Testament?
2. Who was the James whose brother he was?
3. What do we know about Jude?
4. Whom did he have in mind when writing this Epistle?
5. Read this Epistle over again and note its impetuous rush and climax.

¹ Henry Alford, cf. my *Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament*, p. 308.

PART THREE: THE APOCALYPTIC BOOK

CHAPTER XXXV

THE REVELATION

WE come now to the last book of the New Testament As It Stands, and in certain respects, it is the most difficult to understand. The title Revelation is a translation of the Greek word. It really would have been better if the Greek word had been transliterated rather than translated. It might better be called The Apocalypse. This word signifies "A disclosure by God of truths that are themselves secret and unknown." The term designates a peculiar type of prophecy which expresses itself not so much in predictive as in symbolical utterances and visions. "Apocalyptic writings are distinguished from those which are simply prophetic by their predictions referring to the last days, and by their preponderant use of symbols and visions."

There is absolutely no question as to the recognition and use of this book in the early Church, nor as to its ascription to the Apostle John. It is used again and again as an authoritative book of apostolic origin. It is found in the earliest lists of canonical books, and so far as the external testimony to it is concerned, it is practically unanimous.

Doubts arose occasionally, but they were generally due to internal reasons growing out of the interpretation of parts here and there.

In four places (1: 1, 4, 9; 23: 8), the author calls himself John. He distinctly claims to have been an eyewitness of the Saviour's earthly career, and he uses the language of apostolic authority. Justin Martyr affirms its author was the Apostle John. Irenæus who was a disciple of Polycarp, who in turn was a disciple of the Apostle, ascribes it to the Apostle. It is true that there are dissimilarities and differences between this book and the other Johannean writings, but when the circumstances of its origin and its composition are taken into account, these are readily explained. Over against these dissimilarities, which are fully acknowledged, there must be placed similarities that are just as undeniable. Dr. Ezra Abbott says: "A candid reader of the Revelation, if previously acquainted with St. John's other writings and life, must inevitably conclude that the writer intended to be identified with St. John."¹

The destination of the book is definitely stated: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet saying, What thou seest write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (1: 10-11). These cities were all situated in what was known as Proconsular Asia. They were rep-

¹ Ezra Abbott, in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*.

representative churches for there were many others in that region, such as Colossæ, Hierapolis and others. The number seven occurs repeatedly in this book and this number of churches may have been selected to preserve the symmetry of the whole.

The occasion of the book was the explicit direction of the risen Lord to John to write it. Its object is as specific, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (1: 1). From these words, it is evident that the messages to the churches named were of minor importance and that the main purpose was to make known the final victory of the Church.

As to its contents, it may be noted that between the Prologue (1: 1-8) and the Epilogue (22: 6-21), there are seven divisions, namely, 1. The Seven Churches (1: 9-3: 22), 2. The Seven Seals (4: 1-8: 1), 3. The Seven Trumpets (8: 2-11: 19), 4. The Seven Mystic Figures (12: 1-14: 20), 5. The Seven Vials (15: 1-16: 21), 6. The Sevenfold Judgment (17: 1-19: 10), 7. The Sevenfold Triumph (19: 11-22: 5). This outline is suggested by Dr. Warfield.

There have been two opinions as to the date of the book. Some would assign it to a date before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., before John had left that region. Others date it about 96 A. D., in the reign of Domitian. The matter calls for a more elaborate consideration than space

allows here. The author was an exile to the Island of Patmos at the time he received the visions, and doubtless it was immediately written according to his instructions (1: 9-10). This fact seems to throw the decision in favour of the late date suggested above.

No part of the New Testament has given commentators greater trouble in the matter of interpretation than this book, and nowhere has there been such great diversity of opinion. Accept the fact that it is difficult to understand parts of it and let it go at that.

Questions

1. What does Apocalypse mean?
2. Under what conditions was this book written?
3. Wherein do apocalyptic writings differ from predictive prophecy?
4. Where did John see the visions and under what circumstances?
5. Remember that John was now a very old man, probably nearing one hundred years.

APPENDIX

HAVING considered the twenty-seven books which constitute "The New Testament As It Stands," a question immediately arises as to how they have been transmitted down to our day. There are no autograph copies of any of these books. The earliest copies of the New Testament date from the middle of the fourth century. There are some earlier papyrus fragments, but the oldest manuscripts we possess were made about 350 A. D. There are four kinds of Greek manuscripts, namely, papyrus fragments, uncial codices, minuscule or cursive codices, and lectionaries. Lectionaries were reading lessons which were to be read in church services.

Kenyon¹ gives the number of these four kinds of manuscripts as 14 Papyri; 168 Uncials; 2318 Minuscules; and 1565 Lectionaries, 4065 in all. Every now and then new manuscripts are found and the number is thus increasing.

Papyrus which was used at first was made from split reeds and was fragile and brittle. When pages of this material were made up into rolls they were more or less bulky and hard to handle. Eventually papyrus was entirely displaced by vellum or parchment which was made from the skins of kids and goats. This material was more durable and the pages of it could be bound up into volumes which were called codices. The two great codices of the fourth century are Codex Vaticanus, in the Vatican Library, and Codex Sinaiticus, recently

¹ *Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 129.

purchased from the Soviet Government and now in the British Museum.

Dr. A. T. Robertson says,² "The papyrus fragments are few and the lectionaries are numerous but of late date and unimportant. The uncials and the minuscules are the manuscripts that are relied upon for the original text. The uncials are earlier and more reliable, as a rule, than the minuscules, though there are exceptions."

The construction of the text of the New Testament from the wealth of manuscripts, which is commonly called Textual Criticism, and which is a science in itself, cannot be considered here. The reader is referred to the following works:

Merrill's *Story of the Manuscripts* (Lothrop).

Mitchell's *Critical Handbook of the Greek Testament* (Harpers).

Robertson's *Studies in the Text of the New Testament* (Doran).

Since no copyist of a manuscript was infallible, the more copies were made increased the number of what are called "various readings." But Textual Criticism has become so exact a science that we may note that Hort says,³ that "the proportion of words accepted constitutes about seven-eighths of the whole New Testament, and only about one-sixtieth is still in doubt." He estimates that "the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text."

The spread of Christianity among the nations at an early date necessitated the translation of the New

² *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 68 (Doran).

³ *The New Testament in Greek*, Westcott and Hort, vol. 2, p. 2 (Harpers).

Testament into other languages than its original Greek. Probably the first of these versions was the Syriac, for by the middle of the second century Tatian constructed a Harmony of the Gospels in his Syriac tongue, showing that the translation must have antedated his time. The story of the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament into other languages is a thrillingly interesting subject. Today the whole Bible has been translated into 175 languages, while portions have been issued in 765 additional languages and dialects, a grand total of 940 according to the latest figures available. Just recently we have been celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of Coverdale's Bible which was issued in English in 1535. Just recently the American Bible Society issued a statement that some part of the Bible is translated into a new language every five weeks on an average. They estimate that almost one thousand million copies of the Bible in whole or in part have been issued since printing was invented. Truly "the word of God is living."

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